

# THE JESSE JAMES STORIES

## A WEEKLY DEALING WITH THE DETECTION OF CRIME

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 41.

Price, Five Cents.



"PUT UP THAT KNIFE, OR I'LL BLOW YOUR HEAD OFF!" SHOUTED JESSE JAMES.



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# JESSE JAMES IN MEXICO:

OR,

## Raiders of the Rio Grande.

By W. B. LAWSON.

### CHAPTER I.

#### PLAYING FOR A SCALP.

On the Mexican side of the Rio Grande del Norte, almost directly opposite Eagle Pass on the Texan side of the river, and lying in the State of Coahuila, is the little town of Piedras Negras.

And through all the wide borders no one place had a reputation more infelicitous than this same adobe-built Mexican town, whose inhabitants numbered less than two thousand souls.

It was notoriously a "lively" place, and held out inducements of vicious pleasures, which made it a recognized rendezvous for all the most lawless and desperate characters of the frontiers.

Such was Piedras Negras in the year 1877.

Late on the afternoon of a day in early spring, two men rode down into this town of the Mexican frontier.

The animals they were mounted upon were magnificent specimens of horseflesh, showing the pride of race in every impatient movement of their glossy-skinned, handsome forms.

Nor were the riders far behind, regarded as examples of physical manhood.

The one who, on account of the full beard which hid the lower part of his face, looked the more mature, but who in reality was the younger of the riders, was a large, powerfully-built man of thirty-two, who sat upon his horse as though part of the animal, so gracefully did his form accommodate itself to every motion of the spirited steed.

His face would have been called handsome were it not for the eyes, fierce and restless, that had something within their depths which was at once repellent and cruel.

His companion was older by three or four years, of a quieter demeanor, but with enough facial resemblance to denote a close kinship with the other.

Both were dressed in stout, serviceable garments, and wore wide-brimmed slouch hats, and both were armed with repeating rifles and revolvers.

As they entered upon the squalid streets of the town, the younger of the riders sniffed at the atmosphere with an expression of deep disgust upon his features.



He pointed, as he finished speaking, to a large building built of adobe, and roofed with tiles, which bore across its whitewashed front, in letters a foot high, the name:

CASA GRANDE.

Rightly judging that this was a hotel, the two travelers dismounted, and, hitching their horses to a rail provided for that purpose, entered the place.

It was a long, low room, with a hard-packed earthen floor, and fitted up at one end with a rude counter, behind which on some shelves a number of bottles and glasses were arranged.

A number of narrow, iron-barred windows on either side admitted light into this apartment, and between these, and firmly fixed to the walls, were set a dozen or so of small tables.

A half-score of Mexicans were lounging in the place, drinking and playing at cards or dice—evil-looking, sullen-faced “greasers” all; and as the two travelers entered they encountered scowling looks bent upon them from the half-dozen men.

The short spring day had drawn to a close, and with nightfall the saloon had gradually filled up with men.

Gambling seemed to be the chief attraction of the place, for at almost every table a game of chance of some sort was going on.

“I wonder if a fellow could get into a game,” the bearded stranger observed, surveying the scene.

“I haven’t forgotten my skill at the cards, and maybe we might make expenses—when you’re in an enemy’s country; live off of the enemy all you can, eh, Frank?”

“That’s sound logic, Jesse, an’ there’s a fellow that looks like he ought to pan out well;” and Frank indicated a man who was seated alone at one of the tables.

The man was a finely-formed, richly-dressed Mexican, of about forty years of age, but with a face upon which rested a look of evil which marred an otherwise handsome countenance.

He had a bottle and glass before him, but was not drinking; he seemed to be preoccupied with some mental problem, and was gazing moodily into the empty tumbler.

“You are right; he looks as if he might have the rocks—I’ll give him a hail;” and strolling over to the table Jesse dropped into a seat opposite to the Mexican.

“*Como se’ ra*, senor?” he said, politely.

The Mexican raised his head, a fierce look flashed into his eyes, and for a moment it seemed as if he would resent this intrusion upon his privacy.

But if such had been his intention he controlled himself, and, without noticing the salutation, growled out:

“What do you want?”

“Hello! you speak English, eh? that’s well; ‘cause my Spanish is kind o’ pigeon-toed an’ liable to buck me out o’ the saddle.”

The Mexican made a gesture of impatience.

“Again I ask what you want?” he said, fiercely.

“Oh, don’t get mad,” the other said, coolly. “I saw you sittin’ all alone, an’ came over to propose a game of cards.”

“You can be accommodated at any of the other tables—I do not care to play with you,” the Mexican said, shortly.

And with a disdainful shrug of the shoulders he drew his *serape* closer about his form.

The action brought a gleam of anger into the eyes of the American.

“Well, ye needn’t be so derved snappish about it,” he said, coldly. “You looked to me a little above the common herd here. That’s the reason I spoke to you.”

“And who are you, pray, that presumes to address a Spanish gentleman?” the other said, disdainfully.

“Presumes!” and a livid light flashed into the eyes of Jesse. “You want to pick yer words a little more careful, stranger. An American never presumes by addressing any one.”

And then he added, more quietly:

“As for the rest, I’m a man, any way you choose to take me.”

The Mexican smiled scornfully.

“There are men in Mexico, too, senor,” he said, significantly.

“Perhaps you call yourself one?” the American retorted, quietly.

“I am one.”

Hot and quick came the answer.

The American laughed coolly.

“How will you prove that?” he said, a sneering smile upon his lips.

“With any weapon you choose to name,” the Mexican cried, fiercely.

His loud words began to attract attention.

At the various tables where gaming was going on the play paused, and all eyes were bent curiously upon the two men whose menacing looks were fixed upon each other in proud defiance.

The companion of the American, the man called Frank, came nearer to the table.

“What’s up, Jesse?” he inquired, calmly.

“Oh, nothing much; keep still,” Jesse answered, quite as calmly.

And then he continued, addressing the Mexican:

“You mentioned weapons just now, senor, as a test of manhood; but that’s a poor proof of courage. Any cut-throat can prove his bravery in that fashion.”

A dark flush came into the face of the Mexican.

“Americano!” he hissed, “your language is insulting. You are evidently bent upon a quarrel. Do you know to whom you are addressing your remarks?”



"Well, who?"

"I am Juan Fernando Palacio."

"The devil!"

It was not an exclamation of dismay, but of surprise, although the name which the Mexican uttered was one associated in the past with everything calculated to carry consternation with it.

For of all the chiefs of the Mexican raiders, Palacio was the one most detested and feared on the borders of Texas and neighboring Territories.

Swift as a swallow in his movements, and daring to a degree bordering on recklessness, he had time and again crossed the Rio Grande at the head of his band of raiders, carried off vast herds of horses and cattle, and left death and destruction in his path.

He smiled grimly now, as he saw the effect his name had produced.

"Yes, Americano," he added, "I am the man for whose head the Texans offer one thousand dollars."

A wild, reckless look leaped into the face of the American.

"And I," he shouted, "am a man for whose head the authorities of the States will pay fifty thousand to the man who can take it."

The Mexican started violently, and bent a piercing look upon the other.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Jesse James."

In vain the companion of the American had sought to check this answer.

"Are you mad, man, to utter our name here?" he said, sternly.

But all the reckless daring in the fierce nature of Jesse James—for it was, indeed, that famous outlaw—seemed to be aroused.

"Let me alone," he said, impatiently, while a low murmur of astonishment ran through the room at the mere mention of the outlaw's name.

The Mexican was gazing upon him with a look of consternation upon his face.

Jesse laughed grimly as he saw the man's dismay.

"Greaser," he said, grimly, "if you are Palacio, the brigand, you are doubly my enemy. I invited you in a friendly way to a game of cards; you refused. I say nothing against that. It was your right. But your manner of refusing was at once so insulting and offensive, that you must answer to me for it."

The Mexican drew himself proudly erect.

"And I have said, and I say it again, in any way that you choose," he retorted, haughtily. "Juan Palacio fears no one man living, even though that man bears the name of Jesse James."

"Good enough. Will you play a game?"

"Of what?"

"Dice."

"A dozen, if you wish; is that your test of courage?"

"No; but the stakes may appall you."

"What are they?"

Jesse James drew from his pocket a buckskin bag, and tossed it down upon the table.

"That bag holds a thousand dollars in double eagles. I will take that and my scalp against yours and a like sum on three throws of the dice."

A murmur of horror rang through the room at this hideous proposal, and a low buzz of voices followed. Those who understood the language were translating the words to others less familiar with the tongue, and for a few moments quick-drawn gasps of astonishment and exclamations of dismay were heard on every hand.

But they soon ceased, and every neck was craned, every eye fixed, to catch the slightest move of the two principals in the hideous drama about to be enacted.

Meanwhile, the face of Palacio had turned to a sickly hue; his eyes were glaring; he seemed stunned by the horrible proposition.

A grim, taunting smile played about the lips of Jesse James.

"Well, greaser, what do you say? Are you afraid to play for such stakes?" he inquired, derisively.

"Afraid? No; but I never heard of such a thing—to play for a scalp!" the Mexican gasped.

And then he recovered his composure by an effort, and went on, haughtily:

"Why should I consent to play you for what practically will put my life in peril?"

"Why?" Jesse James repeated. "There are a dozen reasons why. In the first place, we are, naturally, enemies; in the second, you are my rival in trade, so to speak; and, in the third place, if you are a man, as you claim to be, and not the cowardly hound I think you are—for that!"

And, leaning over the table, Jesse James struck the Mexican a blow full upon the lips with his open palm.

With a horrible imprecation, Palacio sprang to his feet. A long, glittering knife flashed in his hand; a devilish glare of murder shone in his bloodshot eyes.

But as Jesse James struck the Mexican with one hand, he had at the same instant drawn a revolver with the other, and the deadly weapon now confronted Palacio, the hammer raised, the dark muzzle frowning up into his face.

And behind Jesse stood his brother, Frank James, a revolver in each hand, leveled full at the crowd.

For every hand was upon a weapon, and more than one knife was drawn, as the Mexicans witnessed the sudden insult to one of their countrymen, and a sullen murmur of hate and rage ran through the room.



Then the voice of Jesse James rang out sharply:

"Sit down, Juan Palacio, an' put up that knife, or I'll blow yer head off, do you hear me?"

The Mexican was trembling with rage.

"Curse you!" he hissed between grating teeth; "I'll have your life for that blow."

"Mebbe you will, if you win it," Jesse James sneered. "But will you play now for that scalp?"

"Yes!" the Mexican said, as he put up his knife, and reseated himself at the table. "Bring on the dice."

A half-dozen dice boxes were eagerly offered, and selecting the nearest the Mexican continued:

"There is a sack that contains a little over a thousand dollars' worth of gold dust"; and he deposited a bag on the table. "Three throws, you said, and the highest total to win, I suppose?"

"And the winner to scalp the loser alive," Jesse James added, coldly.

The Mexican nodded.

He was perfectly calm now, and only the burning glance of his eyes betrayed the fierce hatred that was consuming his heart.

"Will I throw first, or you?" he inquired, calmly.

"You go ahead."

"All right."

And the play began—a horrible game—the stake a few ounces of gold, and—a human scalp!

## CHAPTER II.

### THE JAMES BOYS ON THEIR METTLE.

There was an awful fascination in watching these two men as they coolly prepared for the game which was to end in an act of mutilation hideous to contemplate.

Both were outlaws, the one steeped to the very lips in crime, the other in a fair way to become his equal—cool, daring men, who, in the arrogance of their desperate nature, defying all laws of civilization, had carved for themselves a career, whose record reads like a chapter from the Inferno.

Jesse James' bloody deeds had gained for him a world-wide notoriety, and Palacio's daring raids had won the Mexican a more than local reputation for infamy.

But nothing of their lawless natures was visible to the eye, as they faced each other with the little table between, and calmly handled the dice, whose decision would doom one of them to a horrible fate.

The Mexican was to throw first.

As he rattled the dice in the box he glanced about, and, catching the eye of a villainous-looking half-breed, made a slight sign with his hand.

The man nodded, and soon after left the room.

No one save Frank James had noticed the action; but

the circumstance was significant enough to cause the outlaw some uneasiness.

One of the stable boys was in the room, and Frank James motioned him near.

"Muchacho," he whispered, "I will give you a coin if you will saddle our horses, and have them ready in five minutes."

"Senor," said the boy, "it shall be done;" and he was off like a shot.

Meanwhile, Palacio had made his first cast.

Jesse James lifted up the box.

The dies were five in number, and as they were exposed, he called off the figures that lay face up.

"A pair of aces, a five, six, and a deuce—fifteen," he said, laconically.

Then he gathered up the dice, and shook them about in the box for a moment, previous to throwing.

It was the Mexican's turn to lift the box.

"Three aces, a six, and a four—thirteen," he said, as he summed up the total of his opponent's throw.

"Correct; you are two ahead of me," Jesse James said, coldly.

The Mexican made his second throw.

Three trays, a deuce, and a four were revealed when the box was lifted.

"Fifteen again," Jesse James announced.

And when Jesse's second cast was summed up, it amounted to seventeen.

"A tie," he said, calmly; "thirty each."

"Correct," the Mexican retorted, coolly. "The dies fall low to-night."

And he prepared to make his third throw—his last.

"Three fives, a six, and an ace," Jesse James announced. "Your total is fifty-two—and, Palacio, your scalp is mine."

"Not yet," Palacio sneered. "You have twenty-two to beat."

"And I can do it, too, every time," Jesse James retorted, confidently.

Palacio looked about him anxiously.

The half-breed, to whom he had given a signal at the beginning of the game, had returned, and to Palacio's questioning gaze he made an assenting gesture.

Palacio's eyes lit up with a sudden flame.

But Frank James, watching his every movement with the eye of a hawk, saw the action, and in vain tried to fathom the mystery of this quick interchange of signals.

That the Mexican bandit meditated some act of treachery, he had no doubt, and he, too, gave a quick look about to see what chances of escape offered in case of a general row starting.

His search was rewarded by a sight of the Mexican boy,



who, in answer to his eager look, gave an assuring nod, and pointing to the front of the building, left the room.

Frank James understood by this that their horses were awaiting them, ready saddled, in case they would be compelled to fly, and he breathed easier.

But now Jesse James made his last throw.

And the great outlaw uttered a cry of triumph as the dice were exposed.

"Four fives and a four. I beat you two points, Palacio, and your scalp is mine—mine!" he said, with savage exultation.

"Well, take it, if you can," Palacio shouted, fiercely.

With a tiger-like bound, he was on his feet, and with a motion like thought in its quickness, he leaned across the table, and struck Jesse James a stunning blow between the eyes with his clinched fist.

Jesse James fell back into the seat from which he had partly risen at the Mexican's sudden action, blinded by the blow, and dazed for a moment by its sudden force.

Palacio uttered a shrill, wild cry that was taken up outside like an echo.

The next instant the door was flung open, and a dozen men, with drawn knives, rushed into the room.

"Down with those Americano dogs, my men!" Palacio shouted, in triumphant glee.

But his triumph was short-lived.

A quick, sharp pistol shot rang through the room.

Palacio uttered a gasping cry of pain, and reeling dizzily, sank back, and fell across the table.

It was Frank James whose revolver had spoken, and with blazing eyes, he leveled his pistols at the advancing brigands.

"Make for the street, Jesse; 'our horses are there," he shouted, his deadly revolvers piling up a heap of dead and dying and writhing wretches before him. "Quick, man, rouse yourself, or you are lost!"

Jesse James heard his brother's voice above all the infernal din of shouts and cries and curses of rage and pain.

In an instant he was upon his feet, his revolvers in hand, his eyes glaring so menacingly that the Mexicans shrank from before him with cries of involuntary fear.

A tall Spaniard had crawled up behind Frank James, and had his stiletto uplifted to strike a dastardly blow, as Jesse glared about.

In a flash one of his pistols was leveled and fired, and the Spaniard fell and stuck his stiletto into the earth. As he fell his brain was pierced by the outlaw's bullet.

Then, with a hoarse, wild yell, Jesse James sprang into the midst of the Mexicans, his revolver blazing out right and left.

A half-score of stilettoes were struck at him, and some narrowly escaped his heart.

But the fighting fever was on the notorious outlaw now, and he never heeded the pain of his hurts.

Shoulder to shoulder the outlaw brothers fought, ably seconding each other in this carnival of death, as they had often done before.

And now they reached the door, but found it blockaded by the Mexicans; but knives are poor weapons against revolvers, when used in the hands of such men as the James brothers, and it took but a second of time to escape into the street.

They could dimly make out a couple of horses held by a lad, and believing them to be their steeds, sprang toward them.

Jesse ran first, but Frank, who was in the rear, was pursued by three of the Mexicans.

His revolvers were emptied, but stopping suddenly, he turned and struck two of his pursuers with the butts of the pistols, and an instant after a last bullet from Jesse's revolver laid the third one low.

The next moment they sprang upon their horses and shook the bridles free.

"Away, Jesse, gallop for your life—the whole town is aroused, and we'll have a half-hundred pursuers after us in a moment," Frank shouted.

"But, senor, my reward for bringing out your horses!" the stable boy cried, anxiously.

"Oh, curse your money," Frank James said, impatiently, but he flung a handful of money into the boy's hat, and galloped after his brother, who was already in flight.

But meanwhile a scene of the wildest confusion prevailed in the town, and the most alarming rumors were abroad.

A party of the hated Texan raiders had crossed the Rio Grande and were massacring all the inhabitants—men, women and children; and these accursed "gringos" were led by Frank and Jesse James, those terrible devils who never spared anything, as every one well knew.

And these stories grew and multiplied, until the streets soon surged with a most excited crowd.

Alarm bells rang, and the distant drumbeats of the Mexican soldiers, hastily forming at their barracks, mingled with the excited words of the men, and the voices of the women and children, who made the night hideous with their wailings.

But the darkness and confusion aided the escape of the James boys, and long before the commander of the troops had arrived and quelled the disturbance with the aid of his soldiers, and the true state of affairs was discovered to have been nothing more than a barroom brawl, the outlaw brothers had left Piedras Negras far behind.

And as they halted a moment on the banks of a small stream, Jesse said, with a grin, which all the pain of his numerous wounds could not suppress:



"Well, Frank, we came down here for a little fun, an' I reckon we've had it, eh?"

"I reckon so," Frank said, quietly; "but don't talk—gallop! We must be miles away from here by daybreak."

Rapidly the miles flew away behind the gallant steeds of the daring outlaws, for they feared that in a few hours the news of their whereabouts would be flashed over the length and breadth of the land, and the keen-scented bloodhounds of the law be upon their trail.

Throughout Texas, Missouri, New Mexico and the Indian Territory extended a chain of detectives, who held these places under keen, vigilant surveillance ever since the aggregate of rewards placed upon the heads of the outlaw brothers footed up a grand total of fifty thousand dollars.

For the desperate affair at Northfield, in 1876, was still fresh in the minds of all.

Of the eight men who, on a pleasant September day, rode into the Minnesota town, bent on that terrible raid of murder and plunder, only two escaped in the awful hunt that followed.

Three were shot down like wild beasts, and found oblivion in dishonored graves; three others found a living tomb in the dark dungeons of Stillwater's gloomy prison, for never while life remains shall they breathe the air of freedom again.

Jesse James and his brother Frank alone succeeded in evading the minions of the law.

And now for a month the outlaw brothers had been quietly living, under assumed names, at the little village of Carmen, in the northern part of the State of Chihuahua, in Mexico.

But the outlaw brothers were never content with any lengthy period of enforced retirement.

A short season of rest after some desperate affair, and then the tame life palled upon their active natures.

In living quietly at Carmen, they had an object to attain, for which they were laying plans as deep as were ever hatched in Frank James' scheming brain.

But of this more anon.

While the plans of this project were maturing, the restless natures of the outlaws would not allow them to remain idle, and they had determined on a trip through the border States of Mexico.

It was one of the laws of the James boys never to execute a project until they had familiarized themselves thoroughly with the country in which they intended to operate.

This was the main secret of success in evading capture.

A design once formulated, they executed it swiftly, surely, and were miles away, riding straight for their hiding-place, while the pursuers were floundering all over the country on false trails or bewildering roads.

It was in pursuance of these plans that they entered Piedras Negras, with what results we have seen.

"In the name of the devil what possessed you to utter our name down there?" Frank James broke out suddenly, after many miles had been passed over without a word.

"I couldn't help it, Frank," Jesse said, apologetically; "that greaser put on such high airs when he said his name that I couldn't help taking him down a peg."

Frank James growled something beneath his breath, whose meaning Jesse could not distinguish.

He knew he had done wrong in revealing their identity,

and had nothing to offer in excuse, save the anger which had provoked him to the reckless act.

Hence he held his tongue now, for in all matters of judgment Jesse deferred to the abler wisdom and keener wit of his elder brother.

Frank was the man to plan, Jesse the one to execute.

"Where are we heading for—any idea?" he said at last, as Frank made no further remark.

"I don't know; we will have to get back to Carmen as soon as possible now, and keep quiet for a while; the news that we are in Mexico will draw all the cursed detectives in the States to the Rio Grande."

"That's so, Frank," Jesse said, regretfully.

And then he added, fiercely:

"Curse Juan Palacio, anyway—did you kill him, Frank?"

"He went down," Frank said, shortly. "I don't generally have to fire twice at the same mark."

"Well, what made me ask was, that I thought I saw him move just as we left the room."

"It may be—I did not observe it," Frank retorted.

"Well, if he ain't dead, I'll make it a point to hunt him down sometime; I'll have the scalp I won, if I have to kill a hundred greasers to git at him," Jesse said, with a fearful curse.

"And I'll help you," Frank James put in, quietly, but with a look in his eyes which was not pleasant to see. "Before we get through with these greasers, we'll make 'em remember our names."

"But see! the day is breaking; we must stop at some place to rest our horses, and obtain some food for ourselves."

"Right; I don't see the use of such haste, anyway; this isn't much of a telegraph country, and I don't believe we are being pursued," Jesse observed.

And then he added, with a ring of pain in his voice:

"Besides, I am deadly faint from loss of blood."

"Why, are you seriously hurt?" Frank said, anxiously.

"I've got a dozen knife jabs in me; I don't believe they are serious, but the motion of riding has kept them open, and I've been bleeding all night."

"Well, yonder's a river, and we'll probably find a city or village of some kind there; keep up your courage until then, old man."

"Oh, I ain't dead yet," Jesse answered, cheerfully.

A few moments afterward they drew rein on the bank of the river, and about a quarter of a mile down stream, on the opposite side, they saw a collection of houses, in some of which lights were still gleaming.

Shortly after they found the ford and crossed over.

People were abroad even at that early hour, for a band of Mexican raiders had come there the day before, to spend the proceeds of a successful raid, and the event, as usual, had been celebrated by a fandango, which had lasted the night through.

A few inquiries soon directed them to the abode of the chief *medico*, or doctor, which every Mexican village, however small, seems to possess.

The man, half greaser and part Indian, demurred at being routed from his slumbers to attend a gringo at such an unseasonable hour.

But Frank James took a summary way of quieting his murmurs.



With one hand he drew and leveled a revolver at the heart of the half-breed; in the palm of his other he extended a number of glittering coins.

"Which will you take?" he inquired, in an icy tone of voice.

"The gold, senor, the gold," the *medico* said, hastily.

"Then do your work, and do it well, doctor, or down you go," Frank said, sternly.

The *medico* murmured no more; either out of respect for the gold, or overawed by the revolver, he set about his work.

Jesse James had stripped to the waist, exposing a number of knife cuts upon his powerful chest and back, at which the old doctor looked serious.

But a few moments of sponging and bathing, and a few seconds of painful probing, and he announced cheerfully that the wounds would not be dangerous if properly cared for.

Then, applying some cooling ointment, he soon had the hurts skillfully bandaged.

"There, senor," he said, surveying his work with professional pride, "in a week or ten days you will be as good as ever."

"All right, old hoss, and here's your money," Frank said, promptly.

The half-breed's eyes twinkled with greed as he clutched his *guerdon*; and wishing him a polite *adios*, the brothers left his miserable abode.

They soon found a place where food could be obtained, and without unsaddling their animals, they saw them properly fed under their eyes, while they themselves were snatching a few mouthfuls of food.

Meanwhile a number of raiders, half-drunk with their night's debauch, were eying them curiously, many scowling darkly with muttered words and low curses upon the "heretics" and "gringos."

The outlaw brothers saw at once that if they wished for peace they must move on.

So, settling their score, and tightening girths, they mounted the horses and rode leisurely through the town.

They had no wish just then for a row, but neither would they display any undue haste in leaving the town behind.

Once outside, they quickened their pace; but not far had they gone when they heard a shouting in the rear.

A half-dozen or more of the drunken, howling Mexicans were in rapid pursuit, firing off pistols recklessly and wildly, and yelling like fiends.

They evidently meant to impress upon these two quiet young men who had just ridden through their town what kind of dare-devils they were.

Frank looked at Jesse and then both laughed.

So well did these outlaw brothers understand each other that a glance was often sufficient to convey their meaning.

And then to the dismay of the roystering raiders, instead of plunging rowels into their steeds and flying in terror, those quiet young men deliberately turned and faced their pursuers.

Revolvers gleamed in their hands and a few moments after four of the Mexicans lay sprawling on the ground with the bullets of Frank and Jesse James somewhere about their anatomy.

This was a reception which the Mexican drunkards had been far from expecting, and they at once broke and

fled, all that were able, and returned to the village in hot haste.

Then a devilish light came into the eyes of Frank James.

"Come on," he said, "we'll give these greasers a lesson."

And as if mad for mischief and reckless of peril the outlaw brothers charged back and rode through the streets of the town.

Right and left their revolvers flashed upon the demoralized inhabitants.

A regular fusillade ensued, in which bullets rained and tore about like wind-driven hail.

A pandemonium of terror reigned.

These two quiet men had been suddenly transformed into a pair of devils, whose blood-curdling yells struck terror into the hearts of the timid, and brought dismay to the bravest.

But now they are through the town, and comparative quiet reigns once more, and when the bold Mexicans have time to look about them they find three of their men lying dead on the plaza, while a dozen more are desperately wounded.

And Frank and Jesse James, making a detour, rode around the village and gaining the road continued their journey.

They had time again to look at each other now, and Frank James burst into a laugh.

"I reckon they'll let peaceable travelers alone for a while after this," he said.

"I reckon so," Jesse retorted, with a grin.

"And we've made plenty of work for our friend the doctor," he continued, laughing, "and talking about that reminds me to ask, were you hit?"

"Not a scratch."

"Same here."

"Then come on, we must find a place where we can rest or the horses will give out."

Ah! how often had that fact stared the outlaw brothers in the face.

Rest? There was never to be any rest for them, only such as they could obtain with weapons in hand ready for instant use even while they slept.

But the tired horses were once more put into motion, and at the best speed they could command from the distressed animals they proceeded on their way.

### CHAPTER III.

#### A MAGNIFICENT HAUL.

It was a month later, in the march of time.

Spring had given place to an early summer, whose hot breath was already sweeping with fiery ardor over the sandy plains of Chihuahua.

It was on a warm morning in the latter end of May that a train of weary pack-mules, and their equally tired attendants, arrived at the little village of Carmen and went into camp to rest during the heat of the day.

Carmen has nothing to recommend it in the way of beauty, or even cleanliness. It lies on the very outskirts of civilization.

But it is an oasis in the desert, so to speak, and lies on the trail traveled by the Mexican merchants and traders in their journeyings to and from the city of Chihuahua.



The value of the wares carried by these traders on their mule-trains was sometimes enormous.

Nor was the one we have referred to an exception, although, strictly speaking, it was not exactly a traders' train.

The train consisted of six pack mules, each one guided by a muleteer; and on either side of each mule rode a mounted guard.

Eighteen men in all, just to take care of the pack-mules and their precious burden.

And truly they were burdened with a royal load, for each mule carried on his back one hundred and fifty pounds in weight of silver coin, which the merchants of Chihuahua were sending, under military escort, to El Paso.

Nine hundred pounds of silver in all, roughly estimated at one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Besides the guard and muleteers, was the commander of the train, a young lieutenant in the Mexican service, and three American merchants, who had been on a tour of business to Chihuahua, and were taking this opportunity of returning to the border under the escort of the Mexican soldiers.

These three American gentlemen—merchants as they called themselves—had been a puzzle to the young lieutenant from the time they first joined the train.

They were wild, harum-scarum young fellows, who were constantly roving away from the train, and at every town they came to they insisted upon a delay while they explored its pleasures.

But as these Americans had been well represented to him, and were, in the main, good fellows at heart, and kept the lieutenant supplied with luxuries which his pay could not command, the young officer had good-naturedly allowed them to follow the bent of their inclinations.

At Carmen they made no exception to their general mode of procedure, but a short experience with the filth of the place soon satisfied them.

They explained, in their characteristic way, that they had been afraid to remain long in the city, for fear that they would take root in the dirt there.

But as this intelligence was given with a humorous laugh, the officer took it with a pinch of salt, and settled down to his *siesta* with the calm consciousness that he had done his duty, and everything was going on well.

That afternoon, however, his sleep was destined to be interrupted.

The guard aroused him with the information that two "gringos" desired to speak with him.

No Mexican likes to be interrupted in his *siesta*, consequently it was in no very good humor that he faced his visitors. One of the men, who limped slightly in his walk, came forward, and saluted with a military promptitude and precision which the officer returned courteously.

"Capitano, I have a favor to ask of you," the American said.

"Let me hear it, Senor Americano," the officer answered; "if it lies within my power to grant it, I shall be pleased to be of service to you."

He felt flattered by the term "captain," for it was a grade above his present station.

"My brother and I," and he indicated his companion by a wave of the hand, "are engineers; we have been down here examining some mines, and our work is completed;

we have been waiting for an opportunity to return in safety to El Paso, to make our report, and we crave permission to ride with your train."

The officer gazed keenly at the two men, but they bore his scrutiny with unflinching look.

"We are well armed and mounted, capitano," the American continued, "and will bring our own provisions; we shall be no trouble to you whatever, and only desire the protection which your soldiers will afford us, as we hear that the country between Carmen and the Rio Grande just now is greatly overrun by the Apache Indians."

And then he added, significantly, as he saw that the officer still hesitated:

"You will not regret it at the end of the journey, capitano."

The Mexican smiled.

"Well, senor, let it be as you wish; we start as soon as the heat will have moderated a little," and with a wave of his hand he dismissed them to return to his interrupted *siesta*.

The two Americans moved away, and when out of ear-shot of the camp, the man who had remained silent during the conversation, asked eagerly:

"Well, how did you make out, Frank?"

"We are to go with the train, Jesse."

"Good enough," the other observed, exultantly; "and that money will be ours before we are a week older."

And the outlaws, for they were none other than Frank and Jesse James, moved away to make their preparations.

The James boys had managed to reach Carmen with no further adventures after the affair at Piedras Negras, and had been quietly resting and recovering from their wounds.

The incautious mention of their name by Jesse had not resulted as Frank feared, for the report of their whereabouts had not been circulated.

And now they were to put into operation a scheme which had been long maturing.

They had learned that a large amount of specie would pass through Carmen during the latter part of the spring, and had planned to capture it, for the outlaw brothers, never very provident, were getting short of ready cash.

Three carefully-chosen confederates had been sent on to Chihuahua, to watch the progress of events there and report. They were to represent themselves as American merchants, and were amply provided with money and credentials—forged, of course.

The train had arrived, as we know; it remained to be seen if the outlaws could obtain possession of the well-guarded treasure, for the Mexicans outnumbered them almost four to one.

But Frank and Jesse James never took exceptions to such risks once they had determined to obtain their object; and in due time they showed up at the camp and became part of the caravan.

For the first two or three days they were closely watched, but, as their manner was so quiet, and all their actions above suspicion, this surveillance soon ceased.

It was the custom of the train to travel all night and rest during the heat of the day in some sheltered place.

The American merchants had fraternized with the strangers from the first, and just about daybreak on the fifth day after leaving Carmen the five were riding some distance in advance, when Jesse James spoke up.



"Boys," he said, in a low voice, "another night's march will bring us to the Rio Grande, and our chance will be gone. If we intend to do anything, it must be done to-day."

"Well, how do you propose doing it?" one of the "merchants" inquired.

"Listen—I have a plan," Frank James said. "I have noticed that every day, when we stop to rest, the silver pouches are taken from the backs of the mules, in order to allow them more freedom to graze. The bags are always piled in a heap, and a guard of two placed over them, while the rest of the soldiers take their sleep. Now, what I propose is this: To-day, when they are taking their *siesta*, let two of us manage the guards, while the others break up the guns; we will have the soldiers disarmed, then, and at our mercy, should they attempt to fight, which I don't think they will do."

"We can then disarm the muleteers, pack up the money and be gone in a jiffy. What do you say?"

"I say, let's do it," Jesse James remarked, emphatically.

"Me, too," a merchant observed.

While the other two acquiesced as readily.

"All right, then," Frank James continued. "Be ready to jump at the signal."

No more was said, and indeed, among these men, nothing more was needed.

Shortly before noon the train arrived at a small water course, and went into camp, and everything happened as Frank James had described.

The silver pouches were piled together at the foot of a tree, and the mules and horses turned out to graze in the valley, and an hour after the noonday meal all save the two guards and the outlaws were enjoying that afternoon sleep which is so universally observed in the Spanish countries.

The two guards were pacing to and fro in front of the treasure, holding their muskets in the most careless and indifferent manner.

The guns of the whole party were stacked near the treasure.

The outlaws were all together, a little apart from the others, holding a low converse.

"I'll take the two guards," Frank James was saying. "Jesse, you attend to the muleteers, and the rest break up the stack of arms, but be careful not to injure our Winchester; work sharp, and we'll have them demoralized in less'n no time. Are you ready?"

"All ready," came quietly from the others.

"Then, boys, let go."

Drawing his revolvers, Frank James sprang to his feet.

Two shots rang out in quick succession, and the two guards fell to the ground dead.

Instantly the camp was a scene of the wildest consternation.

Roused from their sleep by the shots, the Mexicans sprang to their feet, only to be confronted by the revolvers of Frank and Jesse James.

"Up with your hands, greasers, or we'll kill ye all, every mother's son of ye," Jesse James shouted, in his powerful voice.

A muleteer attempted to draw a weapon, but like lightning a bullet from Jesse's revolver went crashing through his brain.

The young lieutenant came rushing up.

"Ha! what is this?" he shouted. "Treachery! Rally, my men, and——"

But he never completed the sentence, for Frank James fired again, and he fell to the ground, shot through the heart.

Meanwhile, the "merchants" were breaking up the muskets by striking them against the trunks of trees, and, overawed by the fate of their leader and comrades, and the destruction of their arms, the rest of the Mexicans threw up their hands.

They were quickly disarmed.

"Now, then," Jesse James said, fiercely, "two of you fellows pack that bullion on to the mules and be quick about it."

His orders were quickly complied with, and the money was soon strapped to the backs of the pack animals.

The horses of the Mexicans were all shot.

Then, with fierce threats of instant death to any one who should dare to follow, the outlaws rode away with their plunder, leaving the defenseless Mexicans to shift for themselves as best they might.

By forcing the pack mules to their utmost, they reached the Rio Grande by night, and crossed over into Texas.

Here a division of the spoils was made, the James boys taking the lion's share, as usual, and the outlaws separated, Frank and Jesse to visit their possessions in the valley of the Pecos, the others to pass into oblivion, for their identity was never ascertained.

By daybreak the James boys reached the Pecos, and, going to a secluded spot where they knew of a secure hiding-place, they deposited their spoils.

The pack mules were next led some distance away and shot, for Frank and Jesse James proposed to take nothing with them which could implicate them in the recent robbery.

## CHAPTER IV.

### WHIP KING WALLACE.

Some time before this Whip King Wallace was on his way to the ranch of Colonel Daring, a wealthy cattle owner in the vicinity. The Whip King had just returned from driving a herd of cattle to San Antonio. Young in years, his form was graceful and powerful, and his face bronzed by the sun until he might have been mistaken for an Indian.

Coiled about his shoulders he carried the terrible "stock whip" with which he had earned his name.

The stock, or handle, was a foot long, with a loop in one end to confine it to the wrist.

In the other end was an iron ring, over which the strands of the whip were plaited.

The body of the whip was packed hard with fine bird shot; the end terminated in a flexible wire lash six feet long.

It was with this implement that the Whip King had once before rescued Ada Daring, Colonel Daring's daughter, from Almonte Palacio's lieutenant, who, with his band, was trying to carry her off.

The bandits, although numerous and well armed, had been put to flight, some of them gashed terribly by the deadly weapon of the Texan cowboy.



Here in this quiet valley of the Pecos, the James boys were looked upon with respect.

They had acquired considerable property, and their herds were quite large.

In the eyes of their neighbors they were enterprising graziers and traders, and that they absented themselves for a month or two at a time was a matter of no surprise, as they were supposed to be away on some trading expedition, and in the interim their possessions were held well in charge by faithful herders.

Shortly after sunrise, as Frank and Jesse were riding along; they beheld a horseman coming down the valley, who quickened his pace as he saw them.

"It's Whip King Wallace," Frank James remarked, as the horseman came near enough to make this fact certain.

"There's a fellow I like," Jesse observed, approvingly; "he's got just the right sort of dash in him that would make one of us."

Meanwhile Whip King Wallace had come up and saluted them with a "good-morning, gentlemen."

The salutation was promptly returned, and Whip King Wallace inquired:

"Are you going up to your ranch?"

"That's where we are bound for; we've been away a long spell this time, and want to see how things are getting along."

"You will find a great change for the worse, gentlemen," the cowboy continued. "This whole side of the valley has been swept almost clean of the stock by Mexican raiders—your herds among the rest."

"Mexican raiders!" and the faces of the outlaw brothers grew dark and stern. "Is it known who they were, Wallace?"

"Yes; it was the gang that Almonte and Juan Palacio command."

"Then you didn't kill him after all, Frank?"

"So it seems."

"Well, what are we going to do about it?"

"Do!" Frank said, sternly; "we are going to bring those herds back!"

While yet a good distance away from the Daring mansion, the cowboy espied coming toward him a couple of riders, the sight of whom made his heart beat with mingled emotions.

They were coming straight toward him at an easy canter, and when they were about a quarter of a mile away, Whip King Wallace dismounted, and pretended to be busy about his saddle girth.

But he was covertly watching the beautiful face which had become so dear to him, and for a sight of which he had been longing for a month.

Onward came the riders until they were only a score of yards away.

The bright eyes of Ada Daring were sparkling with animation, and she was gazing at her companion with a look upon her face which caused an icy pang to shoot through the heart of Whip King Wallace.

The man who rode at her side was a slightly-built fellow of twenty-five, with pale blue eyes and side-whiskers of a yellowish hue.

His features were good, but were marked by a vacant-looking expression, which sadly marred an otherwise handsome face.

He was dressed in an English riding suit, consisting of "cutaway" coat, a patterned waistcoat and light-colored nether garments.

He wore a high silk hat, and his pedal extremities were incased in yellow-topped boots—all of which fitted faultlessly.

The girl seemed perfectly wrapped up in him, and was looking up into his face as though her very soul hung on his words.

She seemed totally oblivious of her surroundings, and it was only when almost upon the cowboy that she seemed to become aware of his presence.

"Why, it's Mr. Wallace," she said, coolly, after a long, puzzled look, as though striving to remember where she had met him previously.

And then turning eagerly to her companion, she said: "My lord, this is a fortunate meeting; this gentleman is quite a celebrity; allow me to present to you Whip King Wallace."

The Englishman screwed a glass into his eye, and glared at the cowboy.

"Ah, er how do ye do, my good fellow?" he said, in a patronizing tone.

Whip King Wallace bowed stiffly, a disdainful smile upon his lips; to Ada he lifted his hat with a proud gesture, which was not lost upon the girl.

"Before you leave us, Lord Stiles, you must get Mr. Wallace to give you an exhibition of his skill with the whip," she went on; "it is simply wonderful what he can do with it; I witnessed a performance of his prowess once—oh! a long while ago—you will oblige us, will you not, Mr. Wallace?"

"Yes," Whip King Wallace said, savagely, "if you will allow me to choose the object I am to practice on."

A slight smile flickered upon the lips of the girl for a moment.

"Ah, er, I should like to—er see what you can do in that line, my good fellow," his lordship drawled.

"Well, sir, if I have time I may grant your request," Whip King Wallace said, brusquely, as he mounted his horse; "at the present, I have more serious duties to occupy my attention."

"I am going," Whip King Wallace spoke, significantly; and raising his sombrero, he put his horse into motion, and galloped away.

Ada Daring bit her lip.

"That young man wants humbling," she said to herself.

After they had ridden some distance in silence, an odd rumbling aroused her.

A dull, rumbling sound, like distant thunder, growing each moment nearer, until it swells into a bellowing roar, so terrible that the very air vibrates and trembles with its intensity.

And then over a swell of the prairie, about half a mile away, came a sight which froze the very marrow in their bones with horror.

A long front of dark, heaving bodies, a mass of tossing heads, crested with wide-spreading horns, coming on in the mad, headlong speed of blind terror.

"My God! it is a stampede, and we are directly in its path!" Ada cried, in a horror-stricken voice. "Fly, my lord, fly, or we shall be trampled to death!"

But the horses needed no guidance of the rein to turn



them around; they had seen that avalanche of maddened animals coming down upon them, and with snorts of terror, they wheeled about and fled.

The face of Lord Stiles was deadly white, his eyes were bulging with terror, and he seemed to have no thoughts but for his own safety.

For a few hundred yards the two horses ran side by side, then the animal upon which Ada was mounted stepped into a gopher hole and stumbled, almost hurling the girl out of the saddle.

The horse recovered himself with difficulty; but when Ada sought to continue her flight, the animal limped forward a few paces and stood still.

One of his forelegs was wrenched so badly that he could not bear his weight upon it.

Ada uttered a cry of dismay and called wildly after her flying escort.

Lord Stiles had noticed the accident, and was gazing back with a look of horror upon his face.

But he was either too terror-stricken to go to her assistance or he could not check his frightened horse.

"My God! what shall I do—to die thus is horrible, horrible!" the girl cried, wildly.

She sprang down from her horse, and ran with all her speed.

But her breath soon failed, and she stopped, gasping. One look at that horrible death coming down upon her, and she fell to her knees, covered her eyes with her hands, and prayed.

And onward comes that avalanche of living bodies, shaking the earth with their thundering hoofs.

If the girl remains there when the last of those maddened animals shall have passed, you may search, and search in vain, for any trace of Ada Daring.

Meanwhile, Whip King Wallace was proceeding on his way.

The face of the young cowboy was gloomy with bitter reflections, and lines of pain were drawn about his mouth.

"I might have known it," he muttered. "I was a fool for ever dreaming that she would love me."

He sighed deeply as he finished, for it was his first love affair, and the most of us know how deep that strikes in.

"But I did not believe that she would so soon forget the service I rendered her," Whip King Wallace continued, bitterly.

"Bah! she is like all the rest—they may love a man, but let a title come along, and love is smothered by ambition.

"I've been in a fool's paradise for a month; it was very sweet, but I never thought that the awakening would be so bitter.

"But what an object goes with the title she is evidently coveting!" and the cowboy's lips curled contemptuously; "that fellow has no more sap in him than a dead tree."

He scowled darkly for a few moments at nothing in particular.

"Well, let her go," he concluded, and speaking more energetically. "I'll think of her no more."

He had arrived at the top of the hill, or rather the dominant swell of the rolling prairie, and halted a moment to gaze about him.

Away to the southward he could see the handsome residence of Colonel Daring, surrounded by the stables, corals and stock sheds.

To the eastward the glittering waters of the Pecos; its banks fringed with foliage of vivid green.

To the north—

"Hello! a stampede!" Whip King Wallace muttered, as a sight met his eyes with which he was perfectly familiar.

"Whew! and it's a big one, too," he added, a moment later; "there can't be less than five thousand in that herd; the boys will have to hustle to round up that run."

And then his face suddenly blanched.

"My God!" he said, almost in a whisper, "and those two are directly in the path of that run."

He gazed eagerly to the westward, even as he wrenched his horse's head around and drove the spurs into his flanks.

But nowhere could he see anything of the two riders; they had evidently halted behind one of the swells, or were hidden from view by some of the timber groves which dotted the prairie in that direction.

"Both the girl and the Englishman are new to this country and scenes like this," Whip King Wallace muttered, as he plied the whip, "they will never know how to act to save themselves."

The young cowboy was riding furiously toward the herd while he was making these remarks.

Ada and her escort had been riding to the westward when Whip King Wallace left them; the stampede was moving toward the southwest.

The young cowboy, in order to intercept the herd, was heading toward the northwest.

He was not more than a mile away from the running animals when he caught sight of Ada and her companion, and his blood grew cold as he saw that they were almost in the very middle of the path on which the frightened herd was headed.

He shouted with all the power of his lungs, sending his voice forth in a long-drawn "coo-ee" that rang out far and wide.

But they failed to hear him.

"Heavens! they will be lost," he groaned.

And then his features became set and stern.

"I must turn that run to the westward, or they will be trampled out of existence," he said, firmly; "and I'll do it, or die with her."

He uncoiled his long, terrible whip as he finished speaking, passed his hand through the loop, and took a firm grasp upon the stock.

Then he glanced along the front of that vast body of moving animals.

There was no dust; the sun had not yet dried up the moisture left by the spring rains in the ground, and he could see distinctly.

The front was crescent-shaped; on the two outer edges, where the cattle had more freedom of movement, they had advanced much farther than the center, where the animals were packed and crushed together in one great heaving mass of dark, moving bodies.

If those two horns could be directed toward each other, and meet, the stampede would be over.

Hundreds of animals would go down in the crush, but the main body would be stopped.

All along the outer edges of the herd Whip King Wallace could see the cowboys of the ranch at work, uttering



their wild yells and plying their whips, and gradually driving the animals into a more compact body.

And now Whip King Wallace met the first of the frightened animals.

He uttered a wild, ringing yell, and the lash of his whip descended square upon the nose of a fine steer.

The animal gave a bellow of pain, kicked up its heels, and pressed in upon the others.

Then, with shrill shouts, and plying his whip at every jump, the cowboy urged his horse against the moving mass.

The animal knew its work well, and Whip King Wallace had no need to guide him.

Soon the long lash of the terrible whip was red with blood; it was cruel work, but gradually, very gradually, the maddened animals were forced inward, and the press on the center became more crushing.

And all this while Whip King Wallace was giving quick, momentary glances ahead.

"Where can they be?" he groaned. "Oh, God grant that I can clear them from this awful peril!"

He never thought of the Englishman as a rival in that supreme moment of anguish; he only realized that he was a human being, and in terrible danger of his life.

And now they crested a swell, and Whip King Wallace uttered a cry of joy, for he saw that Ada and Stiles were not more than fifty yards from the flank of the frightened herd.

But, to his dismay, he saw them wheel and ride in a direction which would again take them into the path of the stampede.

"Turn to your left!" he yelled, but in that great bel-lowing roar his voice could not be heard.

A light of agony leaped into the eyes of Whip King Wallace; but the next instant his heart almost ceased to beat as he saw the stumble of Ada's horse, and then saw that he could go no further.

But as he saw Lord Stiles leaving her, he ground his teeth in rage.

"Oh! the hound, the coward—the black, bitter shame!" he groaned.

And then as he saw Ada run, he shouted out his directions once more, but, as before, they were lost in the din.

But as he saw the girl fall to her knees, a look of frenzy came into his eyes, and he urged his horse in front of the moving mass.

And now the herd strikes the animal which Ada has abandoned.

He went down with a shrill neigh, and a cow stumbled over him and fell.

And then still others pile up there, and in that one place a sudden stop of the stampede occurs.

And now Whip King Wallace reached the kneeling girl.

Then, without the slightest abatement in his speed, he bent over in the saddle and encircled the form of the girl.

The shock was great, and for an instant Whip King Wallace could not straighten up, and Ada's feet dragged along the ground.

But then by a superhuman exertion of strength, which set the blood throbbing to his head like hammer-strokes, he swung her up before him on the saddle.

A few moments after he had guided his horse out of the

run and halted far from where the stampede was thundering by.

Not till then did he look down into the pure, pale face pillowed upon his throbbing heart.

"Oh, my darling! thank God that you are safe—thank God!"

He hardly knew what he was saying in that wild, intoxicating moment of happiness, when the consciousness that he had saved her from a hideous death filled his heart with such great joy.

But a great shout now put an end to further conversation.

A crowd of horsemen were coming toward them; at their head a fine, soldierly-looking man of fifty, whose naturally ruddy face was now blanched with fear, and in a few moments they were surrounded, and Ada was in her father's arms.

"My little one, my pet, I never expected to see you again," Colonel Daring said, his eyes dim with emotion. "Lord Stiles told me you fell directly in front of the brutes; how did you escape?"

"I escaped through the heroism of Whip King Wallace."

"What! again?" the colonel said. "My lad, I owe you a debt of gratitude which I fear I never can pay."

And he grasped the hand of Whip King Wallace, and wrung it warmly.

"It was nothing, Colonel Daring," the young cowboy said, modestly. "I saw by the way the run was going, that they would be caught, so I turned it."

"Don't you believe him, father," Ada put in warmly; "let me tell you what he did."

And she did; and you may be sure that Whip King Wallace was shown up in his true light.

When she had finished, a great cheer went up for Whip King Wallace; the cowboys were proud of him.

Meanwhile, Lord Stiles cut a sorry figure during this recital.

"You see—er Miss Ada," he said, now, "I wanted to come—er to your assistance, but I couldn't—er stop the horse—the cursed screw—er, ran away with me."

Contemptuous looks passed among the cowboys who heard this; couldn't stop a horse, indeed!

It must be a poor specimen of manhood who couldn't do as much as that with a horse.

But now they reached the house, and Colonel Daring gave orders for a feast to be prepared.

"My daughter was dead and has come to life again," he said, with emotion; "let every man rejoice with me."

And at that feast Whip King Wallace was an honored guest.

## CHAPTER V.

### PALACIO'S RAID.

We wish we could record that the bullet which Frank James fired at Juan Fernando Palacio during the fight at Piedras Negras had killed him.

But Palacio was only struck down senseless by the shot, which glanced on his skull, and he lived to inflict a lot of harm before he was finally hanged.

He was the captain of thirty-five daring and unscrupulous men, prominent among whom was his second in com-



mand, a ruffian, crime-stained and hardened to all feelings of pity or mercy—a man who bore the name of Almonte.

For a long time Palacio had been looking toward the Pecos Valley, rich in flocks and herds, and it became his sole ambition to sweep these flocks and herds from the peaceful vale.

His plans completed, Palacio, one night, at the head of his men, crossed the Rio Grande.

The raid was an entire success.

Over six thousand head of cattle were stampeded, and eight cowboys left dead.

The larger ranches were not touched, but all the possessions of the smaller ranchmen were run off.

With this immense herd Palacio succeeded in recrossing the Rio Grande, and reaching his stronghold in the mountains.

It was on the morning of the third day after the raid that Whip King Wallace met the James boys, and informed them of the loss of their stock.

The young cowboy's little herd had been stampeded with the rest, and his herder, Miguel, killed, for the raid had taken place on the very night that he had spent at the house of Colonel Daring.

The raiders had been pursued as far as the Rio Grande, but there the pursuit had been given up.

Whip King Wallace was, therefore, somewhat surprised to hear Frank James speak about bringing back the stolen animals.

"I do not think it can be done," the cowboy said.

"Young fellow," Jesse James said, with a laugh, "you don't know us."

"But Palacio is probably secure in his retreat long ere this."

"I don't care where he is," Frank James remarked, savagely; "we are going to bring back our stolen cattle."

"But surely not you two alone?" Whip King Wallace said, in surprise.

"We two—unless you will make a third," Frank James said, firmly.

And then he continued, eagerly:

"Will you go with us, Whip King Wallace? We would like that first-rate, for you know how to manage a big drove better than any man on the border; with you to do the driving, and with Jesse and I to protect the rear from pursuit, I think we can teach Palacio the difference between American men and Mexican mongrels."

"But, gentlemen, I could never alone manage a herd of that size."

"Oh, well, we'll say no more about it then," Frank James said, coldly; "come on, Jess, you and I will have to do it."

A hot flush suffused the face of Whip King Wallace; there was that in the voice of Frank James which seemed to cast doubt upon his courage.

"One word, gentlemen," he said, quickly; "you must not think that I am afraid to go with you on this expedition; I simply doubt my ability to drive that herd alone; if I had two men to assist, I would go willingly, for my stock is among the stolen as well as yours; and I am just as anxious as you are to recover it."

"Well, there won't be fighting all the time, and Jess and I have had experience in managing cattle up in Missouri, and would assist, of course."

"Besides, there won't be many of Palacio's gang left to follow us when we get through with them," Jesse James added, significantly.

"All right, then; I'll go," Whip King Wallace said.

He never regretted that decision, for the time came when the knowledge of the country he obtained on this expedition stood him in good use.

"Well, if it's all settled, let us go," and as Frank James finished speaking he wheeled his horse around, and, followed by the others, galloped away.

"I can lead you to where the trail crosses the Rio Grande," Whip King Wallace said, after a few moments of silence.

"That won't be necessary. I am going straight to Palacio's stronghold," Frank James answered.

"Then you know where it is?" the cowboy said, in surprise.

"I reckon so; it will take us two days to get there, as we will be compelled to travel only at night; coming back, we shall have to take the trail of the raid, where there will be grass for the animals."

Nothing further was said, and not to weary the reader with unimportant details, we will hurriedly pass over the events of the two days which Frank James required to reach the stronghold of Palacio.

At a town on the Rio Grande they stopped an hour or two to lay in a stock of ammunition and such simple provisions as they should need on their expedition.

Then, traveling only at night, and lying in concealment by day, they pushed forward as fast as the horses could go.

They had to observe the greatest caution to keep their presence unknown, for, should they be seen in this part of the country, Palacio would soon be informed of the fact.

Two nights they rode thus, and early on the morning of the third day Frank James said:

"We are within five miles of Palacio's camp; let us find a hiding-place for the horses, and during the day we will make an observation, and discuss the best plan of proceeding in this affair."

It was no difficult matter to find a secure hiding-place among the broken spurs of the mountains.

A couple of hours after sunrise the three stole forward to make an observation.

On the crest of a hill, dense with mesquite brush, they paused, and well concealed from view, gazed down upon the outlaws' camp.

Below them they saw a level plain, hemmed in by the mountains, and open only to the eastward, and scattered all about this plain they saw the stolen herds quietly browsing.

At the upper end of this plain, and in a small ravine, was pitched the camp of the raiders.

It was quite five miles off, but by the aid of a pair of field glasses, which Jesse James carried, they could observe all that was going on.

No one appeared to be watching the herd, and if there were any sentinels posted at the entrance to the valley, they failed to discover them.

They lay there all of three hours, impressing upon their minds the nature of the ground, while Frank James de-



tailed a plan of procedure, which was fully discussed in all its bearings.

Then, everything being prepared, they stole back to their hiding-place to get a few hours of much-needed repose.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was about two o'clock in the morning.

Overhead the starlight was bright and clear, and a soft, warm wind came in fitful breaths over the plain.

In the camp of the Mexican raiders all slumbered, even to the sentinel posted at the entrance to the ravine.

The fires, built more for the sake of their cheerful glow than for warmth, were burning low, and threw out only a dim, flickering light.

Only the lowing of the cattle out on the plain, and the song of the myriad of insects in the grass, broke the silence.

And in the midst of this silence there suddenly rang out at the entrance of the ravine a series of startling yells, followed instantly by a number of pistol shots, and straight into the camp of the sleeping outlaws came a couple of horsemen.

Firing right and left, and yelling like fiends, they charged through the camp, and, wheeling like lightning, came charging back again.

Shots followed shots in rapid succession, dealing death at every discharge.

Dazed and bewildered by the sudden attack, the Mexicans sprang to their feet, and, only half-awake, and hearing the wild shouts and cries all about, they imagined themselves surrounded by a vast force.

At the same time, as if to complete their discomfiture, out on the plain arose the familiar Texan yell, which they had learned to dread with deadly fear.

The outlaws waited for no more, but with cries of terror and dismay they scattered and fled as fast as their legs could carry them.

They never fired a shot, but scrambled up the ravine, into the hills, anywhere that offered security, still followed by the shots of their enemies.

The surprise was complete, and the two horsemen, as they paused in the center of the camp, laughed loudly at the success of their daring.

"This is a little like the old Quantrell times, eh, Frank?" one of the horsemen remarked, gleefully. "Lord, didn't we scare those greasers!"

"I reckon they won't stop running from now until sunup. How many did we kill, Jesse?"

"Let's see—one, two, three," and he went on counting the inanimate forms lying about until he announced:

"Ten—not bad, eh?"

"No; but let us go and see how Whip King Wallace is making out; we must get the herd together, so that we can start at daybreak."

Whip King Wallace was doing well; he was riding all about the plain, yelling like a madman, his terrible whip cracking like pistol shots, his wild "coo-ee!" ringing out shrill and clear.

He was bent on thoroughly alarming the cattle, well knowing that they would, in the night, bunch together for protection.

In this he was soon assisted by Frank and Jesse James,

and for the next two hours the plain rang with their shouts.

But it was a hard task gathering in all the stragglers, and day was breaking when it was finally completed.

"Well, we've got them," Jesse James said, wiping the moisture from his brow, as he gazed over that great, crowding herd.

"And the next thing to do is to keep them," Whip King Wallace said, with a laugh.

"Well, we'll do that, too," Frank James observed.

And then Jesse James said:

"Let's go."

A simple suggestion enough when applied to human beings; but here was a herd of six thousand head which was to go along.

How were they to start them?

But Whip King Wallace was equal to the emergency.

"Let me have the best yelling you've got in you, gentlemen, and I'll start them moving," he said, and, riding to the eastward, he halted a moment and surveyed the animals.

An old bull, a veteran of his tribe, caught his eyes, and he lashed him with his whip until he was clear of the herd.

The old fellow was inclined to be ugly, but a few cuts of the whip, administered with more severity, soon taught him better manners, and he went off to the eastward, with his tail in the air.

But he soon stopped, and began lowing plaintively; he would not go off without his harem.

Whip King Wallace knew that, and sent half-a-dozen cows bounding after him.

Others, seeing these on the move, followed of their own accord, and gradually a steady stream was flowing to the eastward.

The herd was on the move.

They were soon clear of the valley and heading in the right direction, and there were a few moments to spare again for conversation.

"How far are we from the Rio Grande, gentlemen—any idea?" Whip King Wallace inquired.

"About sixty miles, I judge," Frank James answered.

"Then it will take us all of four days to get there with this drove."

"We'll get there," Jesse James said, cheerfully.

"I think we will," Whip King Wallace said; "the cattle have had a good rest and are not ugly, but how is the grazing on the way? I've never been in this country before."

"The grazing is good, and there's plenty of water, too," Frank James answered.

"Then, if nothing happens to frighten and stampede the herd, we'll do first-class," Whip King Wallace said, brightly.

But it kept the three men constantly moving to whip in the stragglers, and keep that vast body of animals headed in the right direction.

The progress was necessarily very slow, and at three o'clock in the afternoon they had made only twelve miles.

Frequently during the march Jesse James would pause and sweep the backward path with his glasses, to discover if they were being pursued.

Shortly after three o'clock in the afternoon, after a



more than usual long survey, Jesse came galloping up, and said, coolly:

"We are being followed."

"How many of them could you make out?" Frank James inquired, as he unslung the Winchester from his back.

"About twenty-five, as near as I could judge."

"Well, I reckon we'll have to put a stop to it," Frank James observed, quietly.

"I reckon so," Jesse said, as he followed his brother's example, and brought his rifle into a position handy for use.

"You'll have to do without us for a spell, Wallace," Frank James observed. "We are pursued, and it must be stopped."

Whip King Wallace had been at the head of the herd when Jesse first made his announcement.

"There's about twenty-five after us, and we may go under," Frank James continued; "in that case you'll have to abandon the drove and fly; keep yourself headed to the north, and you'll strike the Rio Grande somewhere near the Pecos; come on, Jesse."

And, followed by his brother, Frank James galloped away on the back trail.

Whip King Wallace looked after them admiringly.

"Those two men are certainly dare-devils," he muttered.

And then he once more turned his attention to the drove.

It was true—the outlaws were following after the drove.

They had discovered by some means that the band which had humiliated them, and decimated their number so sadly, besides carrying off the hard-won spoils of their raid, was composed of only three men.

They were furious when this fact became known, and set out in hot haste to inflict a summary and terrible vengeance upon the daring invaders.

Both Palacio and Almonte were away negotiating the sale of the stolen cattle when Frank and Jesse James made their murderous onslaught, or this pursuit would have been organized earlier in the day.

As it was, the outlaws discovered, when very nearly too late, that they were allowing three of the accursed "gringos"—only three—to put them to shame.

And they swore by all their patron saints that it should not be.

Frank and Jesse had ridden back about half-a-mile, and halted on a slight eminence.

They possessed a great advantage over the Mexicans in having long-range Winchester rifles, capable of killing at eight hundred yards.

Hence they could open fire upon their pursuers long before the Mexicans could use their more inferior weapons.

The outlaws were still fully a mile away, but had caught sight of the two horsemen, as a faint yell coming down on the wind testified.

Jesse James grinned.

"Those fellows think they've got a regular soft snap," he said; "but some of 'em will be food for the buzzards to-night, or I'm a liar."

"I reckon so," Frank James observed. And then he

inquired, as he gazed reflectively at the graduated sights of his rifle:

"What distance shall we try them at?"

"Well, let's give them a surprise, and try it seven hundred yards."

"All right."

And the sights were moved to gain the requisite elevation for firing at the proposed distance.

There was something peculiarly thrilling in the sight of these two men, calmly awaiting the onslaught of their enemies; there was something equally as horrible in the way in which they spoke of taking human life.

One would judge by their talk that they were merely awaiting the approach of some indifferent game, or discussing a target shooting match.

But the yells of the outlaws were becoming each moment louder; and they were lashing their horses and brandishing their weapons in a way calculated to impress a beholder that they meant business.

"Are they near enough, do you think?" Frank James inquired.

"I reckon they are," Jesse said, as he raised his rifle.

"Well, then, let each of us give them three shots, and watch the result," Frank James observed.

"All right," and Jesse James carefully sighted his rifle and fired.

Frank followed a second after.

Slowly, deliberately, the six shots were delivered.

A confusion among their enemies, a sudden drawing in of reins, and cries of rage proved that some of the shots, at least, had not been wasted.

Jesse James rested his rifle across the saddle, and put the glasses to his eyes.

"Well?" Frank James questioned.

"Two horses down and one man killed—no, two, and there goes another horse," Jesse announced.

"Well, that's not so bad—considering the distance," Frank James said, in a gratified tone of voice.

But the Mexicans halted only a few moments, when, spreading out in a long line, they advanced again.

"So that's the game now, eh?" Jesse James said, as he saw the maneuver. "We'll have to let them come closer, Frank; we would only waste ammunition by firing at them strung out like that."

"All right; name the distance," Frank remarked, laconically.

"Try four hundred yards."

"We'll have to try darned quick, then."

A fact which was quite evident, for the Mexicans began firing their rifles and revolvers, and advanced with a rush, wild yells ringing from their lips.

"Let 'em have it, Frank," Jesse James sung out, and he fired.

One of the raiders threw up his arms, and fell from his horse, and as Frank James fired another pitched to the ground, dead.

But, confident in the force of numbers, the Mexicans still came on, firing at every jump.

The James boys were not to be frightened, however, by yells and wild shooting; they had heard too much of that during their career to be unnerved by it now.

Coolly they continued firing, making every shot tell, until four dead men and a number of wounded staggered



the charge of the brigands, and they turned tail and ran like sheep chased by a dog.

"That makes six," Jesse James observed, as he coolly recharged his Winchester. "I reckon they are getting tired of the job they've undertaken."

"It looks like it. Were you hit by any of their shots?"

"Yes; I got a bullet scratch on the arm; how is it with you?"

"Only a wounded hat," Frank James said, laughing, "but I wonder what they are up to now?"

The Mexicans had withdrawn out of sight behind a neighboring swell, and their movements were invisible.

"I am going to ride over there and see," Jesse announced, and he put his horse into motion.

Arrived on the crest of the hill, Jesse James was just in time to foil a cunning move of the outlaws.

Some ten of their number were seeking to sneak around the hill, where they could attack the two Americans in the rear, while the rest were occupying their attention in front.

Jesse saw through the design in a moment.

Instantly his rifle was leveled, and he began firing as fast as he could pump the cartridges into position.

One after another the outlaws fell, until by the time Frank James reached his side, four dead men lay upon the ground, and the rest of the brigands were in full flight, galloping away for dear life.

"They've got enough of it," Frank James observed, gazing after the fast retreating outlaws, "and I guess we have avenged the death of our cowboys."

"Yes; but what if they should return and make a night attack?" Jesse suggested; "these greasers may be human in the day, but they are perfect devils at night."

Frank James was about to reply, when his attention was attracted by a number of moving objects to the westward.

"See," he said, pointing them out to his brother, "what are those things moving there?"

Jesse raised his glasses, and gazed long and earnestly at the black specks.

"Mountain men," he said, at last, "and coming out this way."

"Greasers, Texans, or Apaches—which?" Frank inquired.

Fully three minutes Jesse James gazed at the moving objects before answering.

"Soldiers," he said, at last, as he lowered the glasses; "aye, and Federal soldiers, too. Frank, old boy, I've seen the time when we didn't like to meet those bluecoats, but just now I don't know of any other sight I'd like to see sooner."

"That's so, Jesse, but let us catch up with the herd, and see how Whip King Wallace is making out."

Whip King Wallace was looking back eagerly as they came up.

"It's all right, Wallace," Jesse said, gleefully; "we've left ten of them dead back there, and there's a party of soldiers coming up—we are safe now."

Sure enough, an hour afterward they were overtaken by the bluecoated boys of Uncle Sam.

They were a party of McKenzie's soldiers, and were out after Mexican raiders.

The situation of affairs was soon explained, and the officer in command looked at the three men in wonder.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "you have done more to break up Palacio's gang in one night than I have done in a month."

That night the soldiers camped with the herd, and the next morning started out after the remnants of Palacio's band.

And that day our friends met a party of six Texan cowboys, who were returning from an unsuccessful chase of a party of raiders.

They willingly agreed to help drive the herd, and thus the labors of Whip King Wallace were lightened.

The big drove arrived in due course of time at the Rio Grande, and the cattle were restored to the various owners from whom they had been stolen.

But as, according to the law in such cases, our friends were entitled to a certain percentage of the recovered stock, Whip King Wallace found his own little herd nearly tripled.

And Frank and Jesse James were looked upon as heroes in the eyes of people of the Pecos.

It is sad to think that such a life would not content the outlaw brothers; they might yet, even at this late stage of their blood-stained career, have become useful members of society.

But it was not to be.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE ABDUCTION OF ADA DARING.

When Juan Fernando Palacio heard of the terrible decimation of his band, and the recapture of his stolen herds, his rage knew no bounds.

He vowed by all the saints above and all the fiends below that he would be avenged.

In this frame of mind he was ready to listen to the voice of the tempter in the person of Lieutenant Almonte.

Palacio's lieutenant had a scheme, which had been rankling in his mind ever since he received that cut across the face from the terrible whip of the young cowboy.

It was nothing less than to abduct the daughter of Colonel Daring, and hold her for ransom.

He unfolded his plans to Palacio, and they met with the approval of the outlaw leader.

Three picked men were to accompany Almonte on the raid; and one night they crossed the Rio Grande, sought a safe hiding-place, and bided their time.

That afternoon Ada invited Lord Stiles to ride with her.

And while they were cantering at an easy pace, there came the sudden tramp of horses, and the next instant a number of men rode up, one of whom sprang quickly from his steed, and seized the arm of the girl.

"Caught at last, my pretty little humming bird," he said, exultantly. "We've been laying in wait for ye a long while, but everything comes at last to them that knows how to wait."

Ada Daring looked up in dismay.

She saw an evil, brutal-looking face bending over her, on which was a great livid scar, running from ear to ear across the nose, and she recognized the man who once



before had sought to capture her; the man whom Whip King Wallace had called Almonte.

"Let me go; how dare you touch me?" she cried, struggling to release herself.

But Almonte only laughed brutally at her words, and tightened his grip upon her arm.

And then all the latent manhood that was in Lord Stiles asserted itself.

"Fellow!" he shouted, as he sprang forward with up-lifted whip, "unhand that lady, or I'll horsewhip you within an inch of your life."

But one of Almonte's companions sprang forward, and dealt the Englishman a blow on the head which felled him, senseless and bleeding, to the ground.

Ada uttered a cry of horror as she witnessed the cruel deed.

"Oh, let me go!" she cried, wildly, her heart beating with terror, and struggling desperately, but vainly, to free herself.

Almonte threw his arms about her and pinioned her hands to her side.

And as the girl felt the hot, foul breath of the outlaw upon her face, a sudden, sickening nausea overcame her, a black, crushing darkness fell upon her sight, and, for the first time in her life, Ada Daring fainted away into unconsciousness.

Five days after the abduction a cowboy rode up to the Daring house in hot haste, waving a letter in his hand.

"It's from the devils that took the little gal, colonel—the feller what give me this said so," the cowboy cried.

And he went on to relate how, riding along down on the Rio Grande, and being recognized as one of the herders on the Daring ranch, he had been called across the river by a Mexican, and the letter put in his hands, to be delivered to Colonel Daring.

"And I'm to take back the answer," the cowboy went on. "The feller said he wouldn't show up 'f enny one else came, and ye must hev the answer thar by to-morrow noon."

"All right, Joe; I will remember."

And Colonel Daring hurriedly broke the seal of the letter.

And this is what he read:

COLONEL DARING:—You need not be alarmed about the welfare of your daughter. The girl is held for ransom; we will come to business. The sum we demand for the delivery of your daughter is two hundred thousand dollars. The place for making the exchange to be mutually agreed upon hereafter. You will please let us know your views on the subject by to-morrow noon. Any action of a suspicious or aggressive nature on your part will be the signal for your daughter's death. We will cut her pretty throat from ear to ear if we hang for it the next minute.

(Signed)

JUAN FERNANDO PALACIO,  
LIEUT. ALMONTE.

Colonel Daring shuddered at the savage concluding sentence of the letter.

"The fiends!" he groaned, "to even think of such a thing!"

Two hundred thousand dollars was a sum of money which even he, millionaire that he was, could not gather together all in a moment.

It would necessitate a journey on his part to San Antonio and El Paso, as he would have to negotiate a loan,

for his recent heavy purchases of blooded stock had almost drained him of ready money.

But his musings were interrupted by a horseman who rode up and sprang to the ground.

It was Whip King Wallace.

The face of the young cowboy was set and stern, as he advanced toward the cattle baron with outstretched hand.

"Ada—Miss Daring!" he gasped. "I have just heard from one of your cowboys what has happened."

"Ah! Wallace, my lad, how are you?" the colonel cried, seizing the hand extended toward him and shaking it heartily. "Yes, it is awful! But Ada is well. I have just heard from her."

"Thank Heaven for that! But where is she?"

"That I do not know. She was abducted by Palacio and Almonte, who are holding her for ransom."

"Curse them!" Whip King Wallace exclaimed. "Why didn't I kill Almonte the day I had him under my whip?"

"I say amen to that. I, too, say curse them!" the cattle baron growled. "But when did you get back, my boy?"

"I have but just arrived from El Paso. The business you sent me on is finished, and the last of the stock will be here in a few days. I was going home first to see my mother, when I heard the news that Miss Daring was missing, and rode over here at once. But what have Palacio and Almonte to say?"

"Here are the letter. Read them."

Eagerly Whip King Wallace perused the letter of the outlaws, and then he glanced over the few words written by the girl whom he loved so nobly.

And when the cattle baron, pacing to and fro on the porch, had his back turned, he fervently kissed the writing.

"My darling!" he murmured.

"Are you going to pay this money, Colonel Daring?" he inquired.

"Most certainly."

"Don't do it—at least, don't be in a hurry about it," Whip King Wallace said, eagerly; "for I swear to you that I will outwit these outlaws, and bring Ada back alive and unharmed."

"You!" the cattle baron cried; "but you don't even know where she is."

"I have a suspicion of where she is; you forget that I was once in Palacio's stronghold."

"But I dare not permit it. Do you not see what they threaten to do in case of treachery?" and the colonel gave a visible shudder.

"I will be cautious to excite no suspicion, sir," Whip King Wallace said, firmly. "I can speak Spanish like a native of Castile, and am dark enough to pass for a Mexican. I will disguise myself as one, and enter Palacio's retreat. In your answer to this letter you must insist on the full limit of time granted by the outlaws for making the payment, and you can have the money ready in case I fail; but I will not fail, I swear it."

He spoke so enthusiastically, his dark eyes flashing, his form drawn so proudly erect, that the cattle baron was carried away, despite himself.

"God bless you, my boy!" he exclaimed, as he seized the young cowboy's hands. "I believe you will do it; you have twice already saved her from deadly peril; bring her



back to me safe, and there is nothing you can ask of me that I will not grant, if it lays in my power so to do."

"Nothing, sir?" and a peculiar look flashed into the face of Whip King Wallace. "I will remind you of that promise some day."

"And you will find that I know how to keep my promises."

"Very well, sir; but let us determine on what answer to give to Palacio."

They entered the house, and in the cattle baron's study concocted the following:

MESSRS. PALACIO AND ALMONTE:—I agree to your terms, and will act in good faith, but it will be fully a month before I can gather together the sum you demand, recent heavy expenditures having crippled me somewhat financially. In the meantime, for God's sake, treat my daughter well.

JAMES DARING.

This letter was given to the same cowboy who had brought the other one, and was delivered as directed.

No attempt was made by the cowboy either to gain any information, or to follow the messenger who received the missive.

But long before that time Whip King Wallace had set out on his mission to rescue Ada from the hands of the two outlaw chiefs.

## CHAPTER VII.

### WHIP KING WALLACE ON THE TRAIL.

Whip King Wallace crossed the Rio Grande shortly before daybreak on the morning of the day in which Colonel Daring's answer was delivered.

He was dressed like a Mexican *vaquero*, or cattle herder, a character which his dark skin and eyes, and his thorough knowledge of the Spanish tongue, enabled him to carry out to perfection.

From the cowboy who brought the letter he had obtained a close description of the place where the message of the outlaw chief would await his answer, and, finding the spot, he rode back from the river some four or five miles, and concealed himself in a range of low hills.

He had a pair of small but powerful glasses, and from his position he could command a good view of the spot where the meeting would take place.

Here he waited until noon, when he saw two men riding toward the Rio Grande on either side of the river.

One he recognized as a cowboy; the other was dressed, like himself, in a Mexican costume.

With glasses to his eyes, he watched everything that took place, saw the delivery of the letter, and the parting of the two men.

The cowboy immediately recrossed the river, the Mexican rode off in a westerly direction.

The man frequently cast looks behind him, but, satisfied at last that he was not being followed, he brought his horse down into what is termed on the border "a greaser trot," a gait which the hardy prairie-bred horses can keep up all day, and make their sixty miles.\*

The time had come for Whip King Wallace to act, and he mounted his horse, a fine, powerful animal, the best in the stables of Colonel Daring, which he had borrowed for the occasion.

He overhauled the messenger rapidly.

The man saw him long ere he came up, but as he was

coming from the direction of the foothills, and appeared to be a countryman of his own, he was not alarmed.

"*Bueno dias, señor,*" the cowboy saluted, as he drew up alongside of the Mexican.

"*Bueno dias, señor,*" the man answered, politely; "*como se ra?*"

"Oh I, am well enough; have you such a thing as a match about you—mine are all gone?"

The Mexican fumbled in his pocket a while, and produced the article desired.

"Will you smoke, señor?" the cowboy said, extending a cigar.

"*Mucho gracias, señor.*"

The two men were soon puffing away at their tobacco in a sociable manner.

"That is a fine horse you have there señor," the Mexican said, after a few moments' silence, and eying the cowboy's animal with admiration.

"Is he not, señor?" the cowboy said, proudly. "I have been offered five hundred *pesos* for him."

"He is worth it—every *real*; where did you get him?"

"Oh, I found him—on the other side of the Rio Grande," the cowboy said, with a chuckling laugh.

The Mexican laughed, too; he very well understood the significance of the words.

"And where are you going, señor?" the Mexican inquired.

"To El Paso, to meet our chief."

"Your chief?" the Mexican said, suspiciously.

"Yes; Bustenado," the cowboy said, calmly.

He had named a Mexican raider who was almost as infamous as Palacio, and whom he had seen on several occasions.

"I tell you this in perfect confidence, señor," the cowboy went on, "for I recognize in you a man of my own calling."

"How so?" the Mexican remarked, quickly.

"I saw you one time with Palacio and Almonte at Piedras Negras; and I judge a man by the company he keeps."

The Mexican laughed heartily.

"I will not deny it, comrade—I belong to Palacio's band."

"I hear that you have had bad luck of late," the cowboy continued.

"*Caramba!* yes," the Mexican cried. "The cursed gringos killed twenty of our band; we were surprised, and they outnumbered us four to one."

Whip King Wallace smiled; no one knew better than he the number of men who had engaged in that affair.

"What sort of a man is Palacio to work under?" the cowboy continued.

"Very fine—he is very liberal with us."

"Our chief is just the opposite; bah! I do not like him much," and the cowboy spat contemptuously.

"Well, why not join our band?" the Mexican inquired, eagerly. "I like your looks, comrade, and Palacio wants men."

"*Caramba!* but one does not like to desert, you know."

"Ah, bah! what difference does that make to us? For my part, I would go where there was the most money to be made with the least work."

"That is true, comrade," the cowboy said, heartily. "I



have thought for a long time of cutting loose from Bustenado—he is too strict and stingy.”

“Better join us, then; if you will give me your name, I will mention it to the *capitán*.”

“I am called Manuel Alva; and you?”

“Ricardo Querdo.”

“When will you see Palacio?” the cowboy inquired, after a few moments of silence.

“In a few days, I think,” the Mexican answered, evasively. “Just now, I am bent on a little private business of my own.”

“Well, just mention the subject to him, when you next meet Palacio,” the cowboy said, carelessly.

He was disappointed; he had hoped that the Mexican would invite him to go along with him.

But evidently the man had received orders in the delicate affair which the outlaw chiefs were carrying on which made this impossible, and Whip King Wallace would have to depend on his own resources to enter Palacio’s stronghold.

They rode together for some hours, chatting pleasantly, and relating experiences of their lawless lives—the cowboy doing most of the listening, for he was careful not to overdo his part.

“We shall soon have to part, comrade,” Whip King Wallace said, at a certain part of their journey, “unless your way lies in the direction of El Paso.”

“Not so. I shall soon have to strike off to the southward.”

They were riding by one of the numerous timber groves which dotted the region they were traveling through when this was said.

Suddenly four horsemen darted from the underbrush, and halted in front of them on the road.

They were all Mexicans, and one uttered a cry of triumph as his fierce looks were bent upon Ricardo Querdo.

As for the companion of the cowboy, he seemed to shrink in the saddle as he saw the man before him, and his face turned to a sickly green hue.

“Jose Silvano!” he shouted, hoarsely.

“Yes, you dog-wolf, it is Jose Silvano!” the Mexican said, fiercely. “Your cowardly knife did not quite reach my heart.”

“Well, and what do you want?” the companion of the cowboy said, sullenly.

“Your life!” the other hissed, as he drew his knife. “Dismount from your horse and defend yourself,” and he set the example by springing from his steed.

Ricardo Querdo gazed about him for a moment, the thought of flight uppermost in his mind, but he realized the folly of such a course in an instant.

The companions of his enemy were armed with rifles, and he would be shot down before he had gone fifty yards.

He dismounted, and, drawing his knife, advanced upon his enemy.

“Listen, Jose Silvano!” he said. “I am bound on a mission of importance. If I kill you, am I to continue on my way without harm from your friends?”

“That you may,” Silvano remarked, and, turning to his companions, he continued:

“This is a personal matter, comrades. If Ricardo Querdo kills me, you will let him go his way.”

The men nodded. They evidently had no interest in the matter further than to witness the duel.

“Your comrade will see that you have fair play, Querdo,” Jose Silvano went on; “and now let us finish this.”

“He is no comrade,” Querdo answered, as he advanced to the attack. “I met him by chance on the road.”

The next instant the long knives met with a clash.

Whip King Wallace had drawn to one side while this dialogue was going on, his hand on his revolver; but seeing that the affair was to be only a contest between two, he mingled with the other Mexicans.

“What is it all about, señor?” he inquired, calmly.

“Oh, nothing much,” one of the Mexicans answered, carelessly. “Querdo attempted to assassinate Silvano some months ago, and Jose swore that he would kill him for it the first time they met.”

“Ah! I understand,” the cowboy observed; “but do you think, señor, Silvano can do it?”

“Surely. No one can use the knife like Jose—see!”

Querdo and Silvano had been circling around each other, crouching like tigers for a spring.

Each had his *serape* wrapped around his left arm, and a long *machete*, or Mexican knife, in his right hand.

Suddenly Silvano darted in like a flash; his knife glittered here and there in a half-dozen lightning-like feints, and then was plunged deep into the side of Querdo.

The Mexican uttered a horrible cry, his knife dropped from his hand, and, throwing up his arms, he fell on his back to the ground, a torrent of blood rushing from his side.

Jose Silvano coolly wiped his knife on a bunch of grass, while he watched the gasps of his dying enemy.

“Have you killed him, Jose?” one of the Mexicans inquired.

Silvano laughed, in a boastful manner.

“Does Jose Silvano ever need to strike twice?” he remarked, proudly; “he is not dead yet, but he has not a half-hour to live; come, we will let him die in peace.”

He remounted his horse, and with a polite “*buenos adios, señor*,” to the young cowboy, rode off, followed by his comrades.

Whip King Wallace was left alone with the dying outlaw.

He dismounted, and bent pityingly over the death-doomed man.

“Water!” the Mexican gasped. “I have something to say.”

Whip King Wallace put his flask to Querdo’s lips, and the draught revived him greatly.

“Listen,” he said, his breath coming in quick-drawn, gasping breaths; “I am dying—Silvano’s knife touched my heart—curse him! I have a letter in my bosom which Palacio must have. Will you do me a favor, comrade?”

“You know I will—anything that I can do for you I will willingly perform,” the cowboy said, his eyes sparkling.

“Will you take this letter to Palacio for me?” the dying outlaw inquired, wistfully.

“As fast as my horse can go; but where shall I find Palacio?”

“Listen, and I will tell you.

“About five miles ahead you will strike a trail running



to the south; follow that road about forty miles, and it will lead you into a circular valley."

"I know the place," Whip King Wallace said; "it was where you were surprised some months ago by the gringos and your herds retaken."

"Exactly," the outlaw gasped, eagerly, and, in his excitement, not stopping to ask how the young cowboy knew this fact, "follow up the ravine until you meet the guards; they will stop you, but say to them 'The Rio Grande and Sierra Madres,' and they will let you pass."

"The Rio Grande and Sierra Madres,' I will remember," the cowboy murmured.

"But wait! You will need a token, or Palacio would never believe the story."

He fumbled about his bosom a few moments, and produced both the letter and a small, curiously-shaped stiletto, with a triangular blade.

"Give Palacio this toy—it is more than a weapon; it will tell Palacio that he can trust you, and that I am dead. And here, too, is the letter; it is very important, and I may trust you, comrade, may I not, to give it only to my chief?"

"I swear to you by all the saints, that no man shall see it until Palacio has it in his hands," he answered, impressively.

"That is well," and the dying outlaw gasped for breath, and the cold shivers of death began to run over his body.

"Tell—Palacio—how I—died," he murmured, with a horrible rattling voice, and then became quiet, and gasped, and stretched out his body and was dead.

Whip King Wallace saw that all was over, and, remounting his horse, he continued the journey alone.

His heart was filled with exultation; he had a safe passport into the stronghold of the outlaws—nay, if Ricardo Querdo had not lied, the dagger would win him the confidence of the outlaw chief.

There was only one possibility he dreaded—not for himself, but for his object, the fear that his disguise would be penetrated by some of the outlaws.

And, if such an event happened, his fate would be quick, sure, and terrible.

But this risk the young cowboy was willing to take, and his heart beat high with hope as he struck out on his long ride to Palacio's stronghold.

He did not push his animal; he had the whole night before him, and as he did not wish to reach Palacio's camp before morning, he took his time.

Pretty soon the trail he was following came out upon a road which Whip King Wallace recognized, for it was the same he had passed over once before with the James boys and the recaptured herds.

He camped down at a stream shortly after sunset, and even rested a few hours to allow his horse to graze.

Then once more he proceeded on his mission.

He reached the valley about daybreak, and, without a moment's hesitation, rode straight for the ravine.

He did not know if any eyes were fixed upon him, but his movements were made like one confident of where he was going, and of the reception he would meet.

In the ravine his progress was slower; he passed through the old camp where Frank and Jesse James had made their bloody charge without a challenge, and followed up the tortuous ascent.

But now four or five men suddenly sprang into the path, the bridle of his horse was seized, and a number of revolvers leveled at him.

But Whip King Wallace betrayed no surprise or uneasiness.

"Who are you?" one of the men growled; "and what do you want here?"

"I am called Manuel Alva, and I wish to see Palacio," Whip King Wallace answered, calmly.

"Palacio?" the man said, as if much surprised. "How know you that Palacio is here?"

"I know it, for I come from the Rio Grande, and Sierra Madres."

Instantly the weapons were lowered, and the hands fell from his bridle rein.

"Ah! you are one of us," the spokesman of the guard remarked.

"No; I belong to the band which Bustenado leads."

"Bustenado!" and the man bent a suspicious glance upon the young cowboy; "then how came you to know our passwords?"

"They were given me for the first time yesterday afternoon."

"Who by?"

"Ricardo Querdo; but you are not Palacio," Whip King Wallace remarked, impatiently, "and my orders are to see Palacio in person."

"But first you must satisfy me of your object," the chief of the guards said, sternly. "Why do you wish to see Palacio?"

"I have a letter for him."

"A letter? ah!"

He was one of the men who had been concerned in the abduction of Ada Daring, and instantly comprehended that the letter was in relation to that affair.

"Wait here, and I will summon our chief," he said, and disappeared up the ravine.

He was gone nearly half-an-hour, and when he returned he was accompanied by a man whom Whip King Wallace, although he had never seen him, felt assured was the outlaw chief.

And he was right.

A few moments after he stood face to face with Juan Palacio.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### IN PALACIO'S STRONGHOLD.

Juan Palacio gazed at the young cowboy as he halted in front of him.

But Whip King Wallace bore the scrutiny with unflinching features.

He had dismounted as the outlaw chief came up, and had saluted him gravely by touching his sombrero.

"You have a letter for me?" Palacio said at last, satisfied by his examination.

"Yes, *capitano*."

"Let me have it."

Whip King Wallace extended the missive which Colonel Daring had written.

Palacio broke the seal.

He started violently as his eyes rested upon the signature.



A cold, steely look began to glitter in his eyes and he made a slight sign with his hand.

The guard gathered around closer.

"How came this letter into your possession?" Palacio inquired, sternly.

"It was given to me to deliver into your hands by Ricardo Querdo," Whip King Wallace answered, promptly.

"And why did not Querdo deliver this letter himself?"

"Because he is dead."

"Dead!"

"Si, *capitano*; stabbed to the heart by Jose Silvano."

"How did it happen?"

"Listen, *capitano*, and I will relate the story."

And in graphic words Whip King Wallace related his meeting with the messenger of the outlaw chief, and the tragic event which followed.

But he did more; he represented himself as being a long-time friend of the dead brigand, and incidentally remarked that Querdo had often tried to seduce him to leave Bustenado, and join the band of which he, Querdo, was a member.

"Ricardo Quero bade me give you this, *capitano*," the cowboy said, in conclusion, holding out the triangular-bladed dagger; "it was to prove to you that his confidence in me was not misplaced."

"You are right; Querdo would never have given you this unless he was sure of your loyalty," Palacio said, heartily, "besides, I remember that Querdo and Silvano were old enemies; but why did you not avenge the death of your friend?"

"*Capitano*, I am but one man, they were four," Whip King Wallace answered, simply.

"True—I had quite forgotten; I meant no reflections," Palacio said, hastily, "but you must have been in the saddle all night; come into the camp and rest yourself."

The heart of Whip King Wallace leaped with joy. At last he was to see the place where Ada was held a captive; perhaps he should even see her.

The very thought set the blood throbbing in his veins as he followed after the outlaw, having first returned and staked his horse out on the plain, where he could graze to the end of the picket-rope.

And then a sudden thought seemed to strike Palacio, and he halted abruptly.

"Did Querdo tell you anything of the affair of which this letter is a part?" he asked, eying Whip King Wallace keenly.

"Not a word, *capitano*," the cowboy answered, promptly.

"That is well."

A few moments after they came out on a small plateau green with verdure.

A number of rude tents were erected here, and one more pretentious structure, inasmuch that it was built of logs and had some semblance of a civilized habitation.

And standing in the doorway of this cabin, gazing listlessly out upon the scene, the young cowboy saw Ada Daring.

Her captivity had detracted nothing from her beauty, only that an expression of melancholy rested upon her face.

The appearance of the newcomers drew her gaze upon

Palacio and Whip King Wallace, and the young cowboy hastily pulled his sombrero down over his eyes.

But he was too late; he saw by the sudden, startled expression that flashed into the features of the girl, that he had been recognized.

He threw her a warning glance, and saw that he was understood, for a sudden wave of color came into the face of Ada, and then receded as suddenly, leaving her as pale as death.

There were very nearly a score of men scattered about this plateau, some engaged over the fires, preparing the morning meal, others still sleeping.

Many curious glances were cast upon the young cowboy, but no audible comments were made about his presence there.

He came in with their chief, hence he must have the right to enter their camp.

Palacio went straight up to the cabin, and doffed his hat politely.

"Ah, good-morning, Miss Daring," he said, in English. "I have heard from your father—you may hope soon to see him, for he has consented to pay the ransom which we demand."

And then, passing into the cabin, where an old Mexican crone was busied over the fire, he shouted, at the top of his voice:

"Hurry up the breakfast, *madre*—we are almost famished."

For an instant Whip King Wallace and Ada were left alone.

They dared not speak, but looked at each other with glowing eyes, and as he passed the girl to enter the cabin, the cowboy caught one of her hands for an instant, and pressed it warmly.

Breakfast was soon ready, and they seated themselves at the rude table on which it was spread out.

"Will you join us, Miss Daring?" Palacio inquired, merely as a matter of form, for the girl had never yet condescended to eat at the same table with him.

But to-day, somewhat to his surprise, she answered:

"Yes."

Palacio gave no explanation of the girl's presence there, nor did Whip King Wallace ask any questions concerning her.

"And so you belong to Bustenado's band?" Palacio remarked, as the meal progressed; "have you been with him long?"

"*Capitano*, I have followed Bustenado on many a wild raid for two years," Whip King Wallace answered, readily.

"And I gathered from your story that you are tired of serving under his leadership—is it not so?"

"It has been in my mind to leave him, *capitano*."

"Well, join us; I have need of men—what do you say?"

"I say that since I am here I might as well remain."

"Good! Then I may reckon on you as one of my men?"

"Let it be as you wish, *capitano*."

At that moment a man appeared in the doorway.

"*Capitano*," he said, "Juan is here with a message from Almonte."

Palacio rose immediately, and left the cabin.



No sooner was he gone than Ada said, coolly:

"You were a long time coming."

"You expected me, then?" Whip King Wallace whispered.

"Why, certainly; are you not always at hand when I am in danger?" Ada remarked, calmly.

Whip King Wallace could not help smiling at the retort; but he gazed apprehensively at the old crone.

"You need not fear," Ada said, as she comprehended what he feared, "she is as deaf as a stone."

"How have they treated you?" the young cowboy inquired, reassured by her words.

"Not badly—I have been treated with respect. How is my father?"

"Worried at your absence, but cheerful in the hope of seeing you soon again."

"Poor papa! and you—are you not afraid that you will be recognized?"

"Only by Almonte; we must get away from here before he returns."

"But how?"

"Listen; we have no time to talk now, but some time during the day I will stretch out beneath yonder window, as if to sleep; when it is safe to do so you can come to the opening, and I will tell you my plans—sh! here comes Palacio."

The outlaw chief entered the cabin.

"Alva," he said, "I am called suddenly away, but I have mentioned to the men that you are one of us. I shall return to-morrow, when I will have a task for you to perform; you will remain in camp."

"Very good *capitano*," and Whip King Wallace rose from the table and followed Palacio to the open air, and, when the outlaw chief had gone, he mingled freely with the men.

But after a time he complained of fatigue, and spreading out his *serape* beneath the window in the cabin, he was soon, to all appearances, fast asleep.

Shortly after, the face of Ada appeared at the opening.

"We must get away from here to-night," Whip King Wallace whispered, after a few unimportant sentences had passed between them. "Tell me how you are situated at night?"

"I am kept a close prisoner after nightfall," Ada answered, without looking at him; "the shutter of this window is barred from the outside, and the door locked."

"Does any one remain in the cabin with you?"

"Yes; the old woman who does the cooking; she locks the door, and sleeps with the key in her bosom."

"Could you obtain possession of the key and let yourself out?"

"No; I should have to disarrange her clothing too much to do that, and she is a light sleeper."

"Then you must escape by the window; do you think you can squeeze through?"

Ada laughed lowly—the first laugh she had uttered since her captivity.

"I think I can manage; I am not very big."

"Very well; then, be ready to fly to-night; when I think it is safe to make the start, I will come and tap on the shutter; if everything is well inside of the cabin, you must answer in a similar manner; I will then unbar the shutter."

"I understand."

"Well, that is all."

"All? You haven't told me yet what you have been doing since I saw you last, and, oh! I forgot to ask, how is Lord Stiles?"

"Out of his mind."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Why, he's been sick from a blow on the head he got."

"Poor fellow; he received that blow in defending me from the outlaws," and Ada sighed.

Whip King Wallace was silent; the fatigue of his long ride during the past night was weighing down his eyelids with sleep.

"Do you know that his lordship proposed to me that day?" Ada continued, in a sentimental tone of voice; "he asked me to become Lady Stiles."

"And what answer did you give him?" Whip King Wallace inquired, quickly.

He was wide awake now.

"I had no time to give him an answer; I was captured an instant after—at least, I don't remember giving him one," and Ada knit her pretty brows as though very much in doubt of what she had said during that interview.

"Don't tease me, Ada," Whip King Wallace pleaded. "What did you answer?"

"I have told you."

"But you won't marry that—that man, will you?"

"What can it matter to you whom I marry?"

"I will answer that when I get you away from here."

"Very well, so will I, then."

"Well, go away, then, and let me sleep; I have been in the saddle all night," Whip King Wallace growled.

"Oh, with the greatest of pleasure," and the girl tossed her head haughtily and disappeared from the window.

But a moment after her face was again beaming in the opening.

"Walter," she whispered.

"What is it?"

"I said no; at least I would have said so if I'd had time," and with a radiant smile she vanished, and did not again reappear.

It was very nearly night when Whip King Wallace awoke from his sleep.

He strolled down into the plain to look after his horse, and shifted the picket pin nearer to the entrance of the ravine.

He learned that two guards were stationed in the ravine at night; and these guards he would have to pass in his flight, for there was no means of getting around them.

This bothered him for a while, but he soon developed a plan which he thought would attain his object.

He found a chance to have a few more words with Ada, and then awaited the time when he could act with safety.

But it was long after midnight ere the outlaws finally all quieted down.

In the absence of their two chiefs the men had taken more liberty; some *arguadiente* had made its appearance and gambling had gone on to a late hour.

The man who had been left in charge of the camp in the absence of Palacio and Almonte seemed to be an easy-going sort of a fellow, and allowed the men full latitude; perhaps he could not help himself.



But they were all sleeping finally, and Whip King Wallace, creeping to the cabin, gave the signal.

An answering knock on the inside of the shutter proved that Ada was on the alert, and that the old crone was sleeping.

Then, cautiously, Whip King Wallace removed the bar, and, after some difficulty, succeeded in dragging the girl through the small opening.

And, silent as shadows, they stole through the camp and reached the ravine.

The first part of Ada's escape had been carried out successfully; but now came the real danger of the undertaking.

The guards had to be passed.

Two men were stationed at the mouth of the ravine, where they had an unobstructed view of the plain below, and Whip King Wallace could not hope to cope successfully with both at once, without raising an alarm.

But he had hit upon a method of separating them which he was now to put into practice.

"Wait here, Ada," he said to the girl, concealing her in a clump of bushes; "a man will soon pass you, but do not be alarmed, and do not stir until you hear my whistle; then hurry to me as fast as you can, for the way will be clear."

"I will do as you say; but for my sake, Walter, be careful of yourself," Ada whispered, softly.

"Have no fear; I will be in no danger; now keep quiet as the grave, whatever you hear."

Saying which, Whip King Wallace moved away, taking no caution to soften his footsteps.

He had learned the names of the men on guard that night, and advanced openly to where they could be seen, standing in the bright moonlight, leaning on their guns.

"Which one of you is called Miguel Napa?" he inquired, yawning and stretching his arms as though only just aroused from sleep.

"I am Miguel Napa," one of the men said, stepping slightly forward.

"Valasques wishes to see you in the camp."

Valasques was the man who exercised authority in the absence of Palacio and Almonte.

"What does he want with me?" Miguel Napa growled.

"He did not inform me; but I am to take your station for the rest of the night. Let me have your rifle."

The man willingly surrendered his gun, when he heard that he was to be relieved from duty, and hurried up the ravine.

"You are the new comrade, are you not?" the other guard inquired, when they were alone.

"Yes; my name is Manuel Alva," Whip King Wallace replied.

He was thinking rapidly as he made the answer; he knew that the guard who had gone up the ravine would discover in a few minutes the trick which had been practiced upon him, and would either give an alarm or hurry back to demand an explanation.

He must act, and act at once.

Unperceived under the folds of his *serape*, he drew a revolver from his belt and held it ready to strike a stunning blow.

"Ha, yonder comes a horseman," he cried out, suddenly.

The Mexican turned his gaze to the plain.

"Where?" he said, after a moment. "I can see no one."

"He has just entered that cloud-shadow which lies on the plain! Bend down a little and you will see better."

The unsuspecting Mexican did as directed, and the next instant Whip King Wallace brought his revolver down with crushing force upon the guard's head.

The man dropped like a log, uttering no sound, a slight quivering of his frame alone betraying the fact that he still lived.

Whip King Wallace uttered a low whistle, and in a few moments Ada came hurrying down the ravine.

"Quick! We must hurry," Whip King Wallace said, in a thrilling whisper; "our flight will be discovered in a few moments."

The gallant horse they mounted covered the ground with swift, tireless strides.

And now, away off to the eastward, a faint, garish light was rising above the horizon, warning the young cowboy that daybreak was near.

It behooved him to be looking out for a hiding-place.

As the light grew stronger, Whip King Wallace recognized a part of the region near by a place where he had camped with the James boys, and he urged his horse onward to reach it before the daylight should be upon them.

He had an open plain to cross yet, which terminated on the banks of a stream flowing around the base of the hills.

Thick foliage grew all along the bank of the water-course, and would afford them safe shelter from observation.

And now they entered upon the plain, and the gallant steed, scenting water, soon carried them across the open, and halted on the edge of the woods.

Suddenly a wild yell broke upon their ears, and out from the underbrush sprang a dozen men.

The next instant, before the young cowboy could draw a weapon, they were seized by strong hands, and held helpless in powerful grasps.

Ada uttered a wild cry of terror, startled by the sudden appearance of the men.

Whip King Wallace looked about him, dazed and bewildered by the startling turn of affairs.

A mocking laugh rang in his ears.

"And so you are trying to run away with our prize, Whip King Wallace?" a harsh voice inquired, derisively.

Whip King Wallace looked at the speaker.

He was a powerfully-built man, with sinister-looking brows, and a face on which a livid scar ran from ear to ear.

Whip King Wallace knew him at a glance.

"Almonte!" he groaned.

And then, to himself, he added, despairingly:

"I am lost!"

Almonte gave way to a peal of hideous laughter as he witnessed the expression of dismay upon the face of the young cowboy.

But the next moment his features grew stern, and his eyes glowed with a fierce fire.

"Yes," he hissed, "I am Almonte, and, Whip King Wallace, you shall find out that I know how to repay."

And he tapped the scar upon his face with a significance whose meaning it was impossible to mistake.



## CHAPTER IX.

## FRANK AND JESSE TO THE RESCUE.

While Frank and Jesse James remained quietly in the valley of the Pecos, planning a train robbery at Big Springs, they heard of the abduction of Ada Daring.

It had leaked out and was pretty generally known that Palacio was the prime mover in this daring outrage, and the face of Jesse James grew black as a thundercloud, as he listened to the recital of the affair, and heard the name of his old adversary mentioned.

"There's no use talking, Frank," he said to his brother, "that fellow has got to go under; there won't be any peace in this valley as long as Palacio lives."

"You are right, Jesse," Frank retorted, "and you and I are the men who have got to do the work, and we must bring that girl back. It is true I never saw her, but that makes no difference; she belongs here in the valley, and is one of the family, so to speak."

"Yes, and Palacio's scalp is mine; I won it fairly, and I'm going to have it," Jesse James observed, savagely.

"Well, let's go," Frank James put in, tersely.

Since the recovery of the stolen herds, their prestige in the valley of the Pecos was great, and Frank and Jesse James both took a pride in holding this respect of their neighbors.

The recovery of the girl seemed to them to be their special affair, and they at once set about to accomplish the task.

Stopping only long enough to exchange their jaded horses for fresh animals, they set out at the head of six cowboys who had volunteered to accompany them when their object became known.

The outlaw brothers knew nothing of the terrible threat which Palacio and Almonte had made—to murder Ada, in case any move of an aggressive nature was made against them.

Neither were they aware of what Whip King Wallace was doing; they never paused to ask questions or advice once they had determined to obtain an object or carry out a design.

It was get there and do it—or die.

They crossed the Rio Grande in the night-time, and followed the path on which Frank James had led once before to Palacio's stronghold. On the following morning, at daybreak, just as they were about to debouch upon a plain, Frank James, who was riding in advance, reined in his horse so suddenly that it was with the utmost difficulty the others could keep from riding him down.

"Back into the defile!" Frank James said, in a thrilling whisper; "back! before we are discovered!"

They quickly wheeled their horses round, and rode back a distance into the hills.

"What's the matter, Frank?" Jesse James inquired; "what did you see?"

"A body of men at the very place I intended camping. Halt, boys! this is far enough."

"Are they Palacio's men?" Jesse James inquired, eagerly.

"Who else can they be?" Frank James observed, dismounting.

And he continued, quickly:

"One of you stay with the horses; the rest come with me."

There was a hasty dismounting among the men, and, followed by Jesse and five of the cowboys, Frank James stole cautiously forward to the mouth of the defile.

Here all could see what had caused the sudden action of their leader.

A body of men were encamped on the edge of the stream, and Jesse James immediately had his glasses out surveying the scene.

"Thirteen men," he announced, after a few moments' inspection, "and greasers all."

"Do you know any of them?" Frank James inquired.

"No," Jesse answered, after another long look.

"Let me have ther spy-glasses fur a moment," one of the cowboys remarked.

"I thort so," he cried, the moment he glanced through the glasses; "one of them fellars air Almonte; I knows him well by sight, and, 'sides, ye kin see the mark thet Whip King Wallace left on his face with his lash."

"Look thar!" a man said, suddenly, in an excited whisper; "lay low, boys!"

They all shrunk back as they saw what he indicated—a horseman coming at furious speed across the plain.

Straight for the camp of the outlaws the rider came, and, springing to the ground, was soon in earnest discussion with the outlaws, judging from his excited gestures.

He frequently pointed back in the direction from which he had come, and a few seconds after his arrival the camp was in commotion.

The fires were put out, the horses led into the underbrush, and in a very short space of time not a living thing was in sight.

"What's that for—an ambush?" Jesse James inquired.

"It looks like it."

"Ay! and yonder comes what they air layin' for," a cowboy cried, with excitement.

Instantly Jesse James had his glasses leveled at a horseman, following directly in the path of the first one.

"Why, hello! the fellow has got a girl in front of him," Jesse said, with some surprise.

And then, as the horseman came nearer, he continued, with his eyes still to the glasses:

"That's a mighty pretty girl; and the fellow—eh, what? By the living jingo, boys, it's Whip King Wallace. I know him, although he is dressed like a greaser."

"Then the other must be the colonel's gal."

"I shouldn't wonder; but look!"

They were silent spectators of the sudden capture of the young cowboy and Ada Daring.

"What's to be done now?" one of the cowboys inquired.

"Done?" Jesse James said, "why, we've got to get Whip King Wallace and the girl out of that mess—that's all."

"But how?" Frank James asked, anxiously; "if we ride out of here, they will see us long before we can reach them; and, rather than be bothered by prisoners, they will shoot them before we could come to their assistance—Whip King Wallace, anyway."

"Where are your eyes, old man?" Jesse retorted; "look at the steep bank of the stream that runs at our feet, we can crawl right into their midst unseen in the shelter of that bank."

"By heavens! you are right!" Frank James cried.



"What do you say, boys? They are thirteen, and we only seven, but we can kill the half of them before they ever know what struck them."

"I say, go ahead, and let's do it at once," a cowboy remarked, tersely.

"That's me."

"And me, too."

"Well, come ahead, then; and be careful that they don't see you."

"And, screened by some friendly bushes, Frank James dropped into the stream.

He was quickly followed by the others; and, with weapons in hand, ready for instant use, the seven men waded up the stream, the high bank effectually concealing their movements from view.

Meanwhile, the arms of Whip King Wallace had been securely bound—Almonte regarding the operation with savage glee.

The outlaw was on his way to Palacio's stronghold, with a number of men whom he had recruited in Piedras Negras for their decimated band, and had spent the night on the bank of the river.

He was just about breaking up camp, when a courier, whom he had sent on ahead a half-hour before, returned with the information that a horseman was approaching who carried a woman before him on his steed.

He had seen them from some distance, but was sure of what he had stated.

Almonte's suspicions had immediately been aroused, and he had laid the cunning ambush, the success of which we have seen.

He was aware of the answer which Colonel Daring had made to their demands, as he had met Palacio the night before, and he blessed his patron saint that he had been fortunate enough to regain the prize that had so nearly been wrested from their hands.

And then his face grew dark as he thought of the treachery that had been practiced to steal the girl away.

"So," he said, savagely, "Colonel Daring writes in good faith with one hand, while with the other he thinks to outwit us, eh? He will regret this; it shall cost him dear."

"Colonel Daring had nothing to do with this rescue," Whip King Wallace answered, quickly. "I did it entirely on my own responsibility."

"I do not believe it; you are known to be intimate with the great rancher, and you have no doubt hatched this up between you to save him his gold; but, by all the saints above, he shall pay for it!"

"But again I say, Colonel Daring had nothing to do with it," Whip King Wallace cried, lying desperately. "I love the girl, and could not bear the thought of leaving her in the hands of such villains as you and Palacio."

"Is it so?" Almonte cried, laughing.

"But I do not believe that the colonel knew nothing of your designs," he added, sternly; "but he shall repent it—bitterly! I swear it!"

"You don't say so?" a strange, grating voice cried out.

The next instant a number of men sprang up on the bank of the stream, one of whom shouted, in a loud voice:

"Let 'em have it, boys!"

A volley of pistol shots followed the words, and five of the outlaws went down in the agonies of death.

Almonte sprang upon his horse; he had been wounded by that murderous discharge, but not disabled.

"The gringos!" he shouted. "Away, my men, and save yourselves!"

Even as he gave the order, he turned in the saddle, hate and rage rendering his repulsive features positively fiendish, and fired a dastardly shot at Ada Daring.

But his aim was wild, and the bullet went wide of its mark.

And the next instant a shot from the revolver of Jesse James struck him square between the shoulders, and he tumbled from his horse, as lifeless as a bag of sand.

As for the rest of the men, demoralized and panic-stricken by the sudden, bloody onslaught, they offered but slight resistance, and were mown down before the terrible revolvers of the Texans like grass before the scythe—it was not a battle, it was a massacre, for not a man escaped to tell the tale of that awful slaughter.

"Whip King Wallace," Jesse James said, as he cut the cords which confined the arms of the cowboy, "we got here just in time."

"Indeed you did. I had to give up hope, for I knew Almonte would never forgive me for scarring his face so with my whip," the young cowboy replied, gratefully.

Whip King Wallace married Ada Daring on his twenty-first birthday.

Juan Fernando Palacio came to grief in one of his wild raids.

His horse was shot in a hot pursuit, and pinned Palacio to the ground in its fall.

He was captured by the Texans, and hung, and Jesse James never got his scalp, after all.

Frank and Jesse James continued to reside in the valley of the Pecos for a time, often absenting themselves as of old, but to the last never suspected of being the men whom half the skilled detectives of the land were eagerly looking for.

THE END.

Next week's issue (No. 42) will contain "Jesse James' Double Game; or, Golding, the Dandy Sport from Denver." The next adventures of the bandits took them a long way from Mexico. They had excitement, however, enough, even for Jesse James. Read it, boys, in next week's issue.



# ABOUT FAMOUS MEN.

You know about the new contest, boys. If you don't, turn to page 30 and read the list of prizes we offer and what you must do to get them. Hustle along, boys, and get your contributions in. Here are a few late arrivals in the contest that has just closed. The prize winners in this contest will be announced next week.

## Seth Low's Success.

(By Frank Williamson, Jersey City.)

At the age of twenty-one Seth Low graduated from the Columbia College. At the exercises President Barnard was heard to say, "I have just had a talk with young Low, the first scholar in the college and the most manly young man we have had in years."

When he entered the employ of his father, the largest importer of tea in the United States, he began as clerk in an inferior position, asking no favors and receiving none. His promotions were not gifts, they were earned.

In five years he became managing partner, with millions of dollars under his control.

At the age of thirty-one he was made Mayor of Brooklyn and gave the city two terms of the cleanest and best administration it ever had.

In 1889 he returned to Columbia College as its president, and his great executive ability is shown by the great advance of the college. He donated a million dollars to the library on Morningside Heights, after which he resigned to become mayor of the second largest city in the world, New York.

## "The Plumed Knight"—James G. Blaine.

(By Henry Hofenstein, Baltimore, Md.)

James Gillespie Blaine was born in the hamlet of Brownsville, Washington County, Pa., on January 31, 1830.

His mother was the daughter of Neal Gillespie, Jr., of Scotch-Irish descent. His father was Ephraim S. Blaine.

Blaine's great grandfather was an officer in the Revolutionary War. He rose to the rank of colonel, and it was said that when the most daring patriots' spirits were waning, Colonel Blaine was one of the few who helped cheer them up.

James G. Blaine studied at the Washington College, in his native county. Jefferson College was located about ten miles away from it. These two colleges subsequently, in 1865, united to form Washington and Jefferson College.

Blaine became the editor of the *Kennebec Journal*, of Augusta, Maine, in 1854. He held the position of editor till the 9th of October, 1857.

In the fall of 1858, Blaine was elected to the lower House of the Legislature of Maine. He went into that body with a strong majority behind him. He was re-elected in 1859, in 1860 and in 1861.

In 1862 James G. Blaine was elected to Congress. He

was re-elected in 1864, and he was re-elected in 1866, almost without opposition. He was re-elected for the fourth time in 1868, and on the 4th of March of the following year he was nominated for the Speakership of the House of Representatives.

Three men have each been three times elected to the Speakership of the House of Representatives.

Henry Clay was so honored in 1811, 1813 and 1815, Schuyler Colfax was in like manner distinguished in 1863, 1865 and 1867. James G. Blaine received the same honor at the hands of his party in 1869, 1871 and 1873.

Blaine was a magnetic speaker and a most brilliant statesman, at one time he was called "The Plumed Knight."

In 1880 Blaine was put in nomination for the Presidency by the Honorable James F. Joy, of Michigan, and was defeated, Garfield being nominated to oppose him and elected.

James G. Blaine was appointed in 1888 as Secretary of State. His former career in that office had been cut short by the assassination of President Garfield in 1881. He remained in the State Department until near the close of the Harrison Administration. More properly speaking, he held the place until it became evident that his friends would present his name to the Republican Convention of 1892.

It was already the eve of the convention at Minneapolis, when Blaine retired from the Harrison Cabinet.

Blaine died, on January 27, 1893, after a lingering illness.

## Admiral George Dewey.

(By James Madden, Brooklyn, N. Y.)

In the history of nations we find that many of the great men who figured prominently in the history of each, were the result of some grave event that was the turning point in the life of their respective countries. These men remained in the background, silent observers of all that was passing, until the big trumpet call of duty, and then they awoke from their seeming lethargy and proved themselves to be the men to meet the emergency of the hour. Such a man was Admiral George Dewey.

This illustrious man was born in Montpelier, Vermont, on the 27th of December, 1837. After a time spent in his village school young George was sent to the Norwich Militry Academy to study for a military career. The course in Norwich was four years, and it was Dewey's intention to graduate, but he saw that



quicker advancement could be made in the navy, and so determined to enter that branch of the service. At first his father refused to allow him to enter the navy, but finally yielded to persuasion, and promised to send him to Annapolis, whenever an opportunity for so doing presented itself.

On September 23, 1854, he entered the naval academy at Annapolis. This was a time when there were rumblings of the storm that was to sever the North and South and plunge the whole land into desolation and sorrow. Dewey was opposed to slavery and openly upheld the speeches and sentiments of the abolitionists.

It is asserted that there was little difference between the Dewey at Norwich and the Dewey at Annapolis. He sang and played well, and was on this account a general favorite.

When Dewey was three years at Annapolis he had a violent argument with a younger but larger cadet named Smiley, concerning the merits and beauty of three sisters who lived on Maryland avenue. They repaired to the battleground, and Dewey knocked Smiley down twice in two rounds. The youth then made some comment on one of the young women, and Dewey gave him a swinging right hand blow on the chest, which spun the poor fellow around, then followed it up by kicking him into the Severn River.

At the battle of Port Hudson, in March, 1863, he performed a daring feat of bravery. His ship, the Mississippi, was nearly sunk, and most of the crew were killed. The rest jumped overboard, leaving the wounded, and Dewey, seeing this, rounded them up and returned to the ship. He was highly praised by Farragut.

### Grant, the Great American.

(By Charles Rogers, New York.)

General Grant was born at Point Pleasant, Ohio, April 7, 1822. He was unwilling to follow his father's trade, that of a tanner, and at seventeen he secured an appointment to West Point. His name having been wrongly registered, Grant vainly attempted to set the matter right, but finally accepted his "manifest destiny," assumed the change thus forced upon him, and thenceforth signed himself Ulysses Simpson, the latter being his mother's family name.

Two years after completing his four-years' course as cadet the Mexican War broke out. In this war Grant conducted himself with great gallantry, receiving especial mention and promotion. He then retired to private life, where he remained until the opening of the Civil War. Having been appointed to command a company of volunteers, he went to Springfield, where he became aid to Governor Yates, and was finally commissioned as colonel of the Twenty-first Illinois regiment.

He was a plain, quiet gentle, unostentatious, reticent man, and attracted little attention to himself; but his inflexible resolution, that held steadily to its purpose through every delay and disaster; his fertility of resource to meet each movement of his wary opponents; his power of handling great masses of men, and of maneuvering the widely-separated Federal armies, his unruffled calmness, in emergency, as if he foresaw and prepared for it, and, above all, his sublime faith made

him seem to his followers the very "incarnation of the cause for which they were fighting."

After the close of his Presidential term he made the tour of the world. During his extended journey, he was everywhere received with marked enthusiasm and honor, and his dignified and consistent conduct shed luster upon the country he represented.

He died at Mount McGregor, N. Y., July 23, 1885.

People from all parts of the once-severed country united in sympathy for his loss.

### A Great Naval Commander.

(By Myron S. Albin, New York.)

David Glasgow Farragut, one of the greatest naval commanders the world has ever seen, was born in a village near the city of Knoxville, Tenn., July 5, 1801. His childhood was spent among the exciting scenes of frontier life. David, when about ten years of age, entered the navy as midshipman under the command of Porter. He had a great love for exciting adventures, and when the War of 1812 opened he was in the ranks of the Americans, although he was not fourteen years old. After this he continued in the navy for some time, and received a lieutenant's commission in 1825. When the Civil War broke out, Farragut found himself between two fires—his love for the South and his love for his country. He chose the latter and hastily left his home at Norfolk, Va., and received a commission to sail for New Orleans. His actions in running the forts and his success in capturing the city stand unrivaled in the history of naval warfare. Farragut was after this ordered to Mobile Bay, August 5, 1864, where he had such men as Lieutenant Dewey, of Manila fame, under his command. His letter before going into battle was, "I am going into Mobile Bay in the morning if God is my leader, as I hope he is."

He soon after retired from the navy and visited Europe, Asia and Africa, everywhere receiving the highest honors. He died at Portsmouth, N. H., August 14, 1870. Thus one of the greatest naval commanders of the world expired.

### Thomas A. Edison.

(By Willie Durgin, Mass.)

The celebrated inventor, Mr. Edison, has made marvelous discoveries in electricity.

He invented the phonograph and other wonderful instruments. He proved that invention is an art and not all guesswork.

He is an ideal model for the young people to follow. He had a great quantity of hard luck, and in the end acquired success.

Before he was widely known he was in an office of a large concern when the electrical machinery gave out, and he offered to repair it. They were in desperate straits, and let him try it, although they did not have much hope. He succeeded in repairing it, and was made superintendent of the company.

Soon after this he became famous as an inventor. His factory was in Newark, N. J., but in a short time he gave it up. He had a small telegraph wire in his home



wound with rags and tried to supply the electricity by rubbing the cat's back.

He read all scientific books before he was fifteen years old. At that time he lost his mother. When his mother died he became a newsboy on the trains. He loved this occupation because he earned money by it and could see a great many books and papers.

Meanwhile he was experimenting with chemicals in the corner of the car, but this soon came to an end because the chemicals exploded and set fire to the car. He took lessons in telegraphy from a station master and gradually he worked up until he held an important position in Boston as an operator.

In Boston his experiments brought him more money than his position, so he gave it up and invented his wonderful quadruple machine or double telegraph, by which four messages could be sent at the same time over the same wire. The electric pen, for multiplying copies of letters or drawings is a tube-shaped pen which is driven by electricity and leaves the tracing of the original on another sheet.

The phonograph is about the most wonderful instrument he made.

This is saying a great deal for this instrument, for he made a great many wonderful inventions.

Mr. Edison was born at Milan, Ohio, February 11, 1847.

### The Story of Columbus.

(By James W. Moore, W. Va.)

Columbus was born at Genoa, Italy. The true date of his birth remains in dispute, probably it was in the year 1435.

From his boyhood he was fond of the sea, fond of study, and especially fond of geography. When but fourteen years of age, he went to sea.

Now, Columbus believed the earth was round, he also believed that he could reach the Indies by sailing westward over the sea, as well as by traveling eastward over the land. This was clear to him, but it was hard to make the people believe it.

At last, after eight years of talking in Spain, Queen Isabella agreed to help him, and he set out for the little town of Palos in Spain, with orders for ships and men. The ocean which he was to cross was then called the "sea of darkness." When it was known that they were to cross this sea there was almost a riot, but the queen's orders must be obeyed, and so the officers of Palos set about the matter. Prisoners were set free, and other men had debts forgiven them on the condition that they would agree to go with Columbus.

At last he set out, with three small ships, called the Santa Maria, the Pinta and the Nina. In the first ship Columbus went.

On board the three were ninety men. On their voyage several signs appeared which his men thought were surely signs of evil. But Columbus calmed their fears and told them stories from a book of travels. After a while signs of land appeared, and at last a sailor saw

land distinctly. Then all saw a low beach a few miles distant.

The next morning Columbus went on shore, and took possession of the land, naming it San Salvador. Other discoveries quickly followed. The islands of Conception, Cuba and Hayti were visited. In the last named a fort was erected from the timber of the Santa Maria, which had been wrecked.

In the first week of January, 1493, Columbus returned to Spain. The Spanish were changed. He was the hero, and he might have what he wanted. The queen promptly sent him on a second voyage. This time he reached the Windward group, and explored the coast of Jamaica, and Porto Rico. A colony was established at Hayti.

In all, Columbus made four voyages and made a great many discoveries.

### General Clinton's March.

(By Edward A. Bourke, Chicago, Ill.)

During the Revolutionary War, in 1778 General Clinton was to meet General Sullivan in Southern New York.

The march was through an unbroken wilderness. As there were no roads, their provisions were loaded into boats and floated up the small streams, and there the freight boats and all were carried by the men to the headwaters of another stream. They had little trouble until they reached Otsego Lake, and from this point they expected less, as the outlet of the lake forms the Susquehanna River, and on this river, far below, they expected to join Sullivan.

But the weather was hot, and for many weeks there was no rain. The river had not water enough to float the boats, and for a time Clinton thought he would be obliged to turn back.

But at last he hit upon a scheme that promised success. He built a dam across the river just where it flows out of the lake. His soldiers rolled in great boulders from the field, and filled the space between with brush and clay. The water could not flow out freely.

In three weeks it was six feet above its summer level. The boats were then made ready, with the provisions and men on board and the dam was torn down. The water flooded the banks of the narrow stream, and the whole party were carried down to the place of meeting with Sullivan in safety.

The Indians along the stream saw this sudden rise of water, and they were very much frightened. No rain had fallen, and the only way they could account for it was that the Great Spirit had sent the water to help the white men. They everywhere fled in the greatest alarm. General Clinton did not meet one armed enemy until he joined Sullivan, and the combined army met no opposition until they reached the spot where Elmira now stands.

Here a battle took place, in which the Indians were defeated. Upon the return of Sullivan from his successful raid into the Indian country he was obliged to kill his horse for want of forage, and the place where the horse's skull lay for a long time has since been called Horse's Head.



# TALES OF HUNTING AND TRAPPING.

## SAVED BY THE WOLVES.

By MOSES KENT.

We were encamped by a little stream, that came singing merrily down through the rich prairie land, and in the evening stillness its sweet murmur seemed to fill one with pleasant recollections.

It had been a very busy day with us; from early morning until dewy evening we had been on the hunt, and not without success, as was proven by the venison to be seen in the camp. We had had our supper and were now gathered carelessly about the campfire.

I was thinking of my relatives and friends in the far East, and comparing the comfort of home with this wild Western life. I had joined this hunting party, consisting of four persons with myself, some time previous, and was now having a royal time.

As I lounged at full length on the ground, I took a careful survey of my companions. The short, heavy-set, black-bearded man to my left, who sat cross-legged, and who was gazing so steadily into the flickering firelight, was "Black Dave." What his other name may have been I know not; he was a quiet, inoffensive fellow, brave as a lion, and as good a shot as ever glanced an eye along a brown steel barrel.

The tall, lean, lank, withered-up-looking chap, who sat to my right, busily cutting at his bootheel, could not have covered up his nationality if he had so desired; he was a blue Yankee from "old Varmount," and answered to the cognomen of Seth Hopkins.

But the third and last figure of the group was the most important one of all. He lay at full length on his blanket, easily resting on his right elbow; he held a short black pipe between his strong white teeth, at which he puffed vigorously. His long iron-gray hair hung low down on his neck, and his keen blue eyes shone good-humoredly in the firelight; he was rather slimly built, but his figure was well knit, and his muscles were as hard as steel, and he was as supple as a panther.

This man was Hank Boyd, hunter, Indian fighter, and trapper, now nearly seventy years of age, but as full of life as a young man. He had killed many a bear and buffalo, and had had more than one thrilling adventure with the Indians.

My eyes were still resting on his kind face, when he slowly raised himself to a sitting posture; he then took a leather pouch of tobacco from his belt, filled his pipe carefully, and then, taking a short stick in his left hand, he raked out some hot ashes from the fire, and started his pipe to going.

As he stretched out his hand to rake in the ashes his hunting shirt sleeves slipped up on his arm, and I saw a long red seam, like a scar, on his wrist. Turning toward him, I said:

"What made that scar on your wrist, Hank?"

"An Injun's hatchet," he said, shortly, puffing away at his pipe.

"Tell us the story, please," I said, and Seth, after a pause of reflection, said:

"Yes, consarn it, Hank, give us the story. I would, by gosh."

Black Dave said nothing, but he turned his face toward Hank with a look of interest in his gleaming black eyes.

After a few long-drawn puffs at his pipe, as if that helped to brighten up this scene in his past life, he told the following story:

"One time along back in fifty, I reckon it was, I belonged to a hunting party up on the Northwest plains. We had had good luck, and were thinking of going to the settlements with our packs, and trade for powder, lead and coffee, but we concluded we would have one more deer hunt before we broke camp.

"So one morning bright and early we sallied out, each man going his own route. Well, I had poor luck. I hunted all day and never got sight of a single hoof; so, when night came, I built a fire, spread my blanket, and camped out, hungry and tired, but resolved not to go back to camp without meat.

"It snowed during the night, and I had strong hopes of soon downing some game, but it was late in the afternoon when I struck a trail. I followed it up, and had not gone far when I run into a noble buck. I drew up my gun, and fired; but the buck made off. He ran heavy, and, finding blood on the snow, I knew he was hard hit.

"Loading my gun, I took the trail again, and had just gone round the bottom of a little hill, when crack went two rifles, and a couple of balls zipped by close to my head, one going through the top of my coonskin cap.

"A moment later a couple of Indians came dashing down the hill, yelling like demons. They had heard me fire at the buck and seeing it was badly wounded, they thought I would not stop to load my gun, and so they laid for me; but I stopped the head one quick with a chunk of lead.

"The other fellow came dashing up, and struck at me with his tomahawk. I kept my eye on him, and, when he struck, caught the blow on my left wrist, and there is the scar"—pointing to the long red seam on his wrist. "I had had some trouble to get out my hunting-knife, and now succeeding, I aimed a blow at his breast; he managed to throw up his right arm, and my knife went clear through it.

"He gave a yell of pain, dropped his hatchet, and pulled my knife away at the same time, it falling on the ground between us.

"We then had it rough-and-tumble for a while to see who would get the knife. At last I was able to throw him off, and then he ran off and disappeared.

"I was about winded, though, and had to rest a while before leaving; I knew there were more red imps about, and the sooner I got into camp the safer my hair would



be; so, binding up my wrist as well as I could, I made for camp, some good distance away.

"I had not gone far, however, when I heard them yell, and I knew they had found the dead brave. If I had been fresh I would not have minded any pursuit they might make; but worn with my long tramp and want of food, and weakened by the loss of blood, my case looked dark indeed.

"It was now near nightfall, but that would not aid me any, as my trail was as plain as open day. Nearer came the yells of the devils, and it was not long until they were close behind. Giving all up for lost, I hid myself in a sink-hole in the prairie, and resolved to sell my life as dearly as possible.

"But now a new sound broke the silence. From my left, and rather between myself and the Indians, there was heard a long howl. It was answered off to my right, and soon there was a regular chorus of wolfish howls in all directions.

"And, bounding over the snow, I could see numbers of dark forms. But a new hope now arose in my bosom; the wolves were not coming toward me, but were circling down on the Indians, whose yelling had now ceased.

"There was now the sounds of rifle shots, and I knew the redskins were trying to beat the wolves off; but nothing but a chunk of lead or six inches of cold steel will stop them when they are hungry enough to attack a man.

"Again I made tracks in the direction of camp, hoping that, if the Indians did not succeed in killing them all, they would keep them at bay until I could reach camp, now not far away.

"On and on I went, and drew nearer and nearer to the camp, when suddenly I heard the long, drawn-out yelp of a wolf behind me, and I now knew what was the fate of the Indians, and what mine soon would be if I failed to reach safety.

"Staggering and swaying from side to side like a drunken man, I made a last effort, and reached the top of a small hill, at the foot of which was situated our camp.

"I raised a yell for help, and, then cocking my gun, I dropped on one knee, and as the head of the first wolf appeared over the brink of the hill, I took aim by the dim moonlight, and fired. I saw the wolf fall over, and then knew no more.

"When I first came to consciousness, I was in camp with the boys gathered around me, and save a painful wrist, was not much worse for the wear.

"The boys heard my yell, and, grabbing up their guns, they came to my assistance, and none too soon, as the wolves were almost upon me when they got to where I was stretched out on the ground.

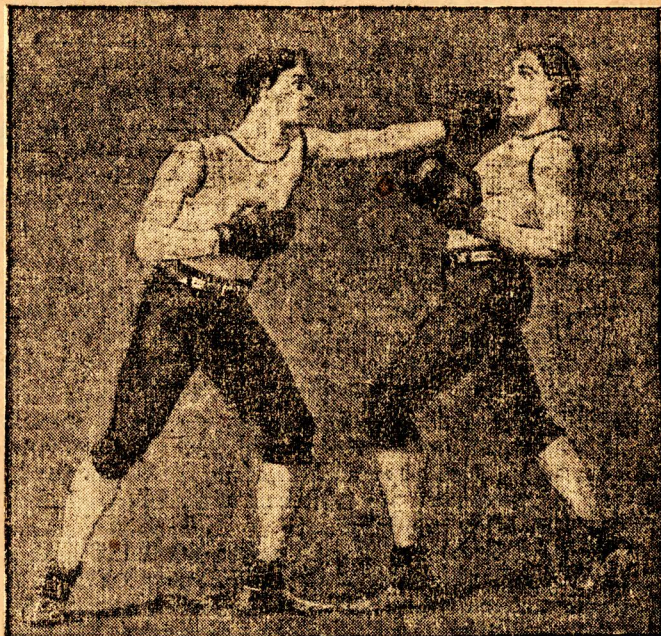
"After some keen firing they had succeeded in beating the wolves off, after most of their number had been killed, and I was then carried into camp, saved from the Indians by the wolves, and saved from the wolves by my pards with good rifles."

The old man now shook the ashes out of his pipe, and prepared to turn in, but I said to him:

"What became of the Indians the wolves attacked?"

"They were all food for the wolves," the old man said, quietly, as he rolled his blanket around him and prepared to go to the Land of Nod.

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Every boy who has ever seen a boxing contest has a chance to capture one of the prizes. The contest may be between boys or men, beginners or well-known amateurs. If you should not win a prize you stand a good chance of seeing your story and name in print, anyway.

To become a contestant you must cut out the Boxing Contest Coupon on this page, fill it out properly, and send it to JESSE JAMES WEEKLY, 232 William Street, New York City, together with your article.

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**THIS CONTEST CLOSES MAY 1, 1902.**

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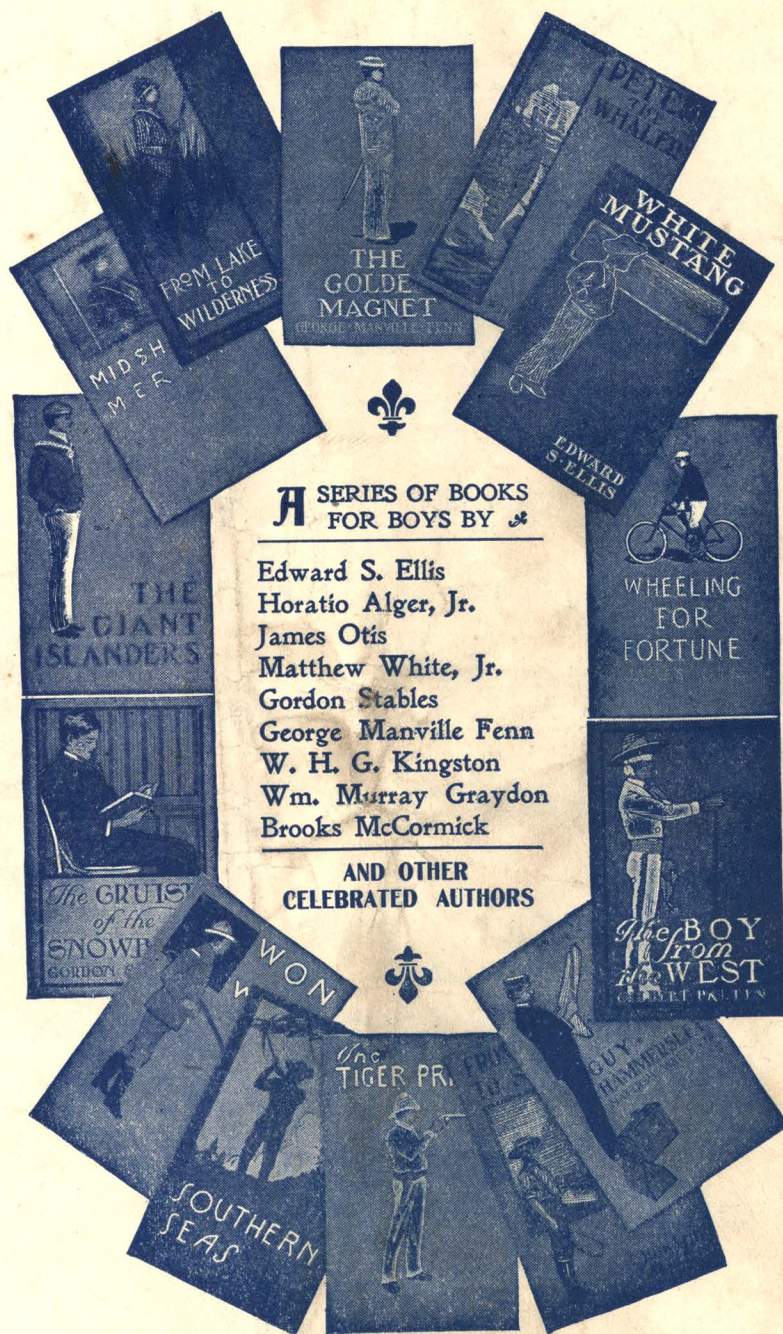
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